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BALDUR'S GATE II

Shadows of Ahm

by the stratos group



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Introduction

With Baldur's Gate II: Shadows of Amn, Bioware and Black Isle Studios hope to improve on the game widely whispered to have saved the RPG genre, Baldur's Gate. The game boasts an amazingly large amount of gameplay, with numerous major quests that span seven chapters and many smaller quests that depend on which character class you choose to play. New third-edition character classes are included, such as the sorcerer and barbarian.

This guide contains everything you'll need to know to master the game, including:

- Tips on creating and developing your main character
- Details on all the spells and types of weaponry you can acquire
- Information on your friends and enemies
- A detailed walk-through of the main story of the game

We'll also tell you how best to defeat your enemies and give you tips on which spells to learn and which to pass over.

Before you start reading here, however, we highly recommend you take a good hard look at the game manual. The folks at Black Isle, Bioware, and Interplay once again did an outstanding job with the book, and as such, we've left out information that is well explained in the manual. If you're new to AD&D RPGs, read the manual cover to cover before beginning the game.

Good luck, little one. May you fare well in your travels.





Chapter One: Character Creation

For those among you who are veterans of Baldur's Gate and have decided to import your old character, you can skip this section. Otherwise, read slowly and carefully, as your choices here will greatly impact everything you do for the course of the game.

Gender

Your choice of gender has little effect on the game. The only affected options are character portraits, in-game appearance, and options for NPC (non-player character) romantic interaction with your character. As such, it can slightly affect your choice of subquests within the game, but that's about it. You can even give a male character a female voice, if you're so inclined.

Race

While a character's gender is of minimal importance, his race is vitally important. Different races have different classes open to them as well as the choice of dual- or multiclassing. Most also have benefits or penalties. Choose a race that not only allows the class or classes to which you're going to assign a character, but will let you excel in them.

Humans

Racial benefits and penalties: Can choose any class, can dual-class

Available classes: All

Available multiclasss: None, although humans can dual-class at any time

Elves

Racial benefits and penalties: Resistance to charm and sleep spells, can see in the dark through infravision, +1 when using bow or long sword, +1 dexterity, and -1 constitution

Available classes: Fighter, ranger, cleric, druid, mage, thief, specialist mage

Available multiclasss: Fighter/thief, fighter/mage, mage/thief, fighter/mage/thief





Half-elves

Racial benefits and penalties: Infravision, limited resistance to charm and sleep spells

Available classes: Fighter, ranger, cleric, druid, mage, thief, bard, specialist mage

Available multiclasss: Fighter/thief, fighter/cleric, fighter/mage, mage/thief, cleric/mage, fighter/druid, cleric/ranger, fighter/mage/thief, fighter/mage/cleric

Gnome

Racial benefits and penalties: Infravision, resistance to magic, +1 intelligence, -1 wisdom

Available classes: Fighter, cleric, thief, specialist mage

Available multiclasss: Fighter/thief, fighter/cleric, fighter/illusionist, illusionist/thief, cleric/illusionist, cleric/thief

Halfling

Racial benefits and penalties: Very resistant to magic and poison, infravision, +1 when using slings, +1 dexterity, -1 strength

Available classes: Fighter, cleric, thief

Available multiclasss: Fighter/thief

Dwarf

Racial benefits and penalties: Infravision, resistance to magic and poison, +1 constitution, -1 charisma

Available classes: Fighter, cleric, and thief

Available multiclasss: Fighter/thief, fighter/cleric

Half-Orc

Racial benefits and penalties: +1 strength, +1 constitution

Available classes: Fighter, cleric, thief, and barbarian

Available multiclasss: Fighter/thief, fighter/cleric, cleric/thief

Different races are better suited to different classes. For example, half-orcs are excellent fighters, since they receive bonuses to strength and constitution, both of which are integral stats for fighters, while a gnome isn't as good a choice, as it gains no real bonuses applicable to battle. Choose wisely.





Class

By far the most important choice to make when creating a character is which class he will be. A character's class determines his strengths and weaknesses, abilities and restrictions, and so on. You can choose one class for a character or, if non-human, you can multiclass, sharing experience points equally between classes and gaining both the abilities and restrictions of each class. Humans may dual-class, choosing one class and later adding a second class. Multiclassing is straightforward: Simply choose Multiclass, then select the desired class combination.

Dual-classing is more complicated. Once a human character reaches level 2 in his given class, he may at any time choose to add a second class by selecting Dual-Class on the character information screen. After doing so, the character loses the abilities of the first class until he has surpassed the first class's level in his second class. For example, if Zaxxon, a level 3 wizard, dual-classes to become a wizard/cleric, he loses the ability to cast mage spells until he is a level 4 cleric. After dual-classing, a character can never advance further in his or her first class.

Baldur's Gate II introduces "kits," which are essentially classes-within-a-class. They offer further specialization within each class, with their own pros and cons. For example, the ranger beast master kit bestows extra stealth on the character, along with the ability to cast more animal summoning spells, but beast masters cannot use metal weapons.

Warriors

Warriors are the bread and butter of the AD&D world. Nary a party will survive the dangers of Faerûn without at least two warriors in its ranks.

Barbarian

Imagine a slightly weaker, slightly faster fighter, and you've got a barbarian. They move faster than other characters and are immune to extra backstabbing damage. The rage special ability bestows +4 bonuses to constitution and strength, +2 to saving throws vs. magic, a two-point armor class penalty for five rounds, and can be used once per day for every level 4 character. Rage also makes the barbarian immune to charm, fear, hold, and level drain. Beginning with level 11, the barbarian will gain a 10 percent resistance to crushing, missile, piercing, and slashing damage. This will





increase by 5 percent at levels 15 and 19. Barbarians also gain a higher average number of hit points when they level up. They cannot wear plate mail and may only put two proficiency points in any given slot. All races can choose to be barbarians. The maximum level attainable in Baldur's Gate II is 19.

Fighter

The fighter is your standard-fare butt kicker. He's generally used to soak up damage while dealing out large amounts of pain at the same time. Fighters can gain up to five proficiency points in any given weapon type, making them quite deadly (at the fifth proficiency level, a fighter will get a +2 bonus to hit, a +3 bonus to damage, and an extra attack every other round). Fighters need a high strength rating, and high dexterity and constitution values are musts as well. These fine warriors may use any weapon in the game. Fighters may reach level 19 in Baldur's Gate II.

Fighter Kits

Fighter	Standard fighters can use any type of weapon or armor and may gain five weapon specialization points in any area. They cannot use spells.
Kensai	Kensai fighters gain a bonus to hit and to damage every third level, gain a +2 bonus to speed factors every fourth level, and have use of the kai ability, making all attacks do their maximum damage for 10 seconds once a day for every level 4 fighter. On the downside, they cannot wear armor, gauntlets, or bracers, and they can't use missile weapons.
Berserker	The main difference between a berserker and a regular fighter is the berserker's ability to become enraged. While enraged (he can use enrage once a day for every four character levels), the berserker gains a +2 bonus to hit, to damage, and to armor class; a 15-point hit-point bonus; and immunity to charm, fear, hold, imprisonment, maze, sleep, and stun. However, after the enrage wears off, he incurs a two-point penalty to hit, damage, and armor class as well as losing the hit-point bonus.
Wizard slayer	Wizard slayers are specifically bred to take spellcasters down. With every successful hit, the target receives a 10 percent chance of failing in his spellcasting. Also, for every character level, slayers gains a 1 percent magic resistance. They cannot use anything of a magical nature except weapons and armor.





Monk

The closest thing to a martial artist in Baldur's Gate II, the monk can deal out amazing amounts of damage with nothing but his bare hands. He cannot cast spells, nor can he wear armor. (He does, however, begin with a very good armor class, so the lack of armor isn't as bad as you may think.) Monks can use the same weapons as thieves, with the exception of two-handed weapons. Also, monks are exceptionally quick and get quicker as they advance, eventually attacking many times per round. But his special abilities really take the cake. Stunning blow (available once per day for every level 4 character) causes the target to have to save with every attack or be stunned. Every third level, the monk gains a one-point bonus to his armor class vs. missiles. At level 5, the monk becomes immune to disease. At level 7, he gains the lay on hands ability, which heals two hit points per level. At level 9, he gains a +1 bonus to saving throws and immunity to charm. At level 10, his fists become a +1 weapon. Level 11 bestows poison immunity. At level 12, his fists become +2 weapons. At level 13, the quivering palms skill becomes available; if the monk hits an opponent with this skill, he must save or be instantly killed. At level 14, monks gain a 42 percent magic resistance that increases 3 percent every level. At level 15, his fists become +3 weapons. Finally, at level 20, only magical attacks can harm him. All in all, if you can get past the inability to wear armor, the monk is a very cool character. Only lawful humans can become monks. Be sure that your monk has excellent constitution, strength, and dexterity. Monks in Baldur's Gate II can reach level 21.

Ranger

Rangers are fighters who just happen to be woodsmen as well. At high levels (8 and above), they gain the ability to cast spells. Rangers can only train to the second proficiency level in weaponry, but can dual-wield weapons, move silently, charm people or mammals, and choose a racial enemy, toward whom they gain immense (+4) combat bonuses. Only humans, elves, and half-elves of good alignment may be rangers, and all rangers need high strength, dexterity, constitution, and wisdom ratings.

Ranger Kits

Ranger	The standard ranger is detailed in the previous section.
Archer	Our favorite ranger kit, the archer gains immense (and we do mean immense) bonuses to missile weaponry. Every third level bestows a +1 to hit / to damage bonus. Every level 4 archer gains a called shot, bestowing even more bonuses upon his shots for the next ten seconds as follows. Level 4 gives a one-point penalty to the target's THAC0, level 8 causes a one-point penalty to the





	target's saving throw vs. magic, level 12 lowers the target's strength by one, and level 16 gives a two-point bonus to missile damage. Archers cannot wear metal armor and can only put one proficiency point in melee weapons, but can put more than the ranger's normal maximum of two points in missile weaponry. Rangers can only reach level 17 in this game.
Stalker	Stalkers are very stealthy rangers. Their stealth ability is augmented by 20 percent, they receive the ability to backstab (though not as well as thieves), and gain the mage spells haste, protection from normal missiles, and minor spell deflection level 12. Stalkers cannot wear armor better than studded leather.
Beast Master	These animal aficionados receive a 15 percent stealth bonus as well as the ability to cast animal summoning 1 at level 8, 2 at level 10, and 3 at level 12. They cannot use metal weapons.

Paladin

These warriors of virtue fight for justice. They can specialize in weaponry to the second level like their brethren rangers, may heal themselves, turn the undead, protect from and detect evil, and gain a +2 bonus to all saving throws. Beginning with level 9, they can cast priest spells. Only lawful good humans may be paladins. All paladins must have high charisma ratings, though strength, constitution, and dexterity are also important. Paladins can only reach level 17.

Paladin Kits

Paladin	The standard paladin may use protection from evil, lay on hands, and detect evil.
Cavalier	Cavaliers specialize in destroying demons and dragons. They gain a +3 bonus to hit and damage vs. demonic or draconic enemies; have use of the remove fear spell once per day per level; are immune to fear, morale failure, and poison; and have a 20 percent resistance to fire and acid. They may only use melee weaponry.
Inquisitor	Inquisitors can cast true sight and dispel magic once per day for every four character levels and may not be held or charmed. Inquisitors do not have the ability to use lay on hands, turn undead, cure disease, or to cast priest spells.
Undead Hunter	A man of undead nightmares, the undead hunter has a +3 bonus to hit and damage vs. the undead, cannot be held or level drained, and cannot use the lay on hands ability either.





Priests

Priests are the fabric that holds a party together in battle. They generally handle all healing, blessing, and morale needs of the party, letting the rest of the group concentrate on destroying its opposition.

Cleric

People tend to think of a cleric as the weak healer of a party. While clerics are the best healers in the Forgotten Realms, a cleric is far from weak. At higher levels, the offensive spell repertoire of the cleric is almost as formidable as that of the mage. Further, clerics can wear plate mail and still cast spells - a huge plus. While they cannot use bladed or piercing weapons, this inadequacy is more than made up for in the form of the turn undead skill. Turn undead lets a cleric (or paladin) channel power from his chosen deity and terrify or destroy the undead. Evil clerics can sometimes gain control of these creatures, causing them to fight with the party rather than against it. Clerics need a very high wisdom rating to be most effective. All races can be clerics, and clerics can reach the level 21.

Cleric Kits

Cleric	The standard cleric has the turn undead ability, cannot use bladed or piercing weaponry, and may only use one proficiency point per weapon type.
Priest of Lathander	These priests can cast hold undead as well as use a special ability - boon of Lathander - once a day for every tenth level. This ability bestows a +1 bonus to hit, to damage, and to saving throws; an extra attack per round; and immunity to level drain to the caster for six seconds per character level.
Priest of Helm	Helm's priests gain true sight and the special ability seeking sword. Seeking sword creates a magical +4 sword (though the +4 is only used to determine whether the target can be hit - there is no +4 damage bonus), doing two to eight damage per hit and giving the cleric three attacks per round. Duration is one round per character level.
Priest of Talos	These priests gain the lightning bolt ability (once a day for every fifth level) and the special ability stormshield, which protects the priest from lightning, fire, cold, and missiles for six seconds per caster level).

Druid

Through a tight connection to the world of nature, druids can shape-change into various animals, including the polar bear, winter wolf, and boring beetle, once each day. They also can cast priest spells like their clerical brethren.





Note that only humans and half-elves can be druids, and they can only use leather armor and bucklers, clubs, darts, spears, daggers, slings, and staffs. Druids need high wisdom and constitution ratings. Druids can only advance to level 14.

Druid Kits

Druid	The standard druid is detailed in the previous section.
Shapeshifter	The shapeshifter can morph into a werewolf once per day every two character levels and to a greater werewolf once per day beginning at level 13. Shapeshifters cannot wear armor or shapeshift into the regular druid forms.
Totemic Druid	The totemic druid's lack of shapeshifting ability is offset by his ability to summon a spirit animal once per day per level.
Avenger	Avengers may shift into the form of a sword spider, baby wyvern, and salamander in addition to the normal druid forms. Also, they can cast the mage spells chromatic orb, web, lightning bolt, improved invisibility, chaos, and chain lightning. They may not wear armor greater than the regular leather variety, and they receive a two-point penalty to strength and constitution.

Rogues

Another requisite part of any good party is a rogue. You'll quickly find that the skills of a thief or bard (or both!) will come in quite handy in your travels.

Thief

Thieves are the cunning little backstabbers (literally) of Faerûn. They have the special abilities stealth, backstab, pick pockets, pick locks, and find/remove/set traps. Thieves may obviously not be of lawful good alignment, nor can they wear non-leather armor or use regular shields. Their weapons include clubs, daggers, darts, crossbows, short bows, slings, short and long swords, and quarterstaves. Thieves must have a high dexterity rating. Thieves can advance all the way to level 23.

Thief Kits

Thief	The standard thief has the backstabbing ability and 20 percentage points per level to use to advance thieving skills.
Assassin	Once per day for every fourth level, the assassin can coat his weapon with a poison that causes six points of damage every six seconds for 30 seconds (30 points total, though a successful saving throw limits the damage to six points total). At level 10, the poison acts twice as fast, and at level 15, it acts three times as fast and does more damage, possibly even slowing the





	target. The assassin only gains 15 percentage points per level to distribute amongst his thieving skills.
Bounty Hunter	Bounty hunters gain a 15 percent bonus to their trap-setting skills and can lay better traps. First-level traps slow the target, 11th-level traps hold the target; 16th-level traps (called Otiluke's resilient sphere) are cast around the target, and 21st-level traps create a maze around the target. Bounty hunters gain fewer points to distribute each level.
Swashbuckler	The fighting-man's thief, the swashbuckler gains a one-point bonus to his armor class as well as a one-point bonus to his armor class, to hit, and to damage every fifth level. He can also specialize further than normal in weaponry and gain three points to proficiency in the two-weapon style of fighting. He does not, however, receive a multiplier to backstabbing damage.

Bard

You'll never find my party traveling without a bard in the lead (unless of course he's been killed and is on the back of one of my warriors, waiting to be resuscitated). The bard is the jack-of-all-trades of the land. With high charisma, bards are ideal conversationalists. They have very high lore ratings and can identify 80 to 90 percent of the items you'll encounter without the use of expensive third parties, scrolls, or spells. They can cast mage spells (at level 2 and higher), and they have the pick pockets and bard song skills. Bard song increases party luck and morale and becomes more powerful as the Bard gains levels. Bards need high dexterity, intelligence, and charisma ratings. The bard class is open to human and half-elf characters only. Bard can reach level 23.

Bard Kits

Bard	The standard bard is, well, pretty standard. He has everything detailed previously.
Blade	The blade is essentially a bard that can kick some serious butt. He has offensive spin and defensive stance abilities to help him get the butt-kicking done. Offensive spin endows the bard with +2 bonuses to hit and damage, along with an extra attack per round. Defensive stance awards a one-point armor class bonus for every level up to a maximum -10 bonus. The bard cannot move while using defensive stance. Both skills last 24 seconds. The downside to this kit is that the bard is only half as effective at picking pockets and identifying items as a regular bard. Also, the blade's battle song does not improve over its level 1 power.
Jester	The sole quality of the jester that deviates from the norm is that his battle song is hostile to the enemy party rather than helping your party directly. All nearby (30 feet) enemies must save versus magic at +4 each round,





	or they'll be confused.
Skald	A true warrior bard, the skald has a +1 bonus to hit and damage, and his song gives party members a +2 bonus to hit, damage, and armor class up to level 14. At level 15, the bonus increases to four points, and at level 20, the skald's friends also gain immunity to confusion, fear, and stun. His weakness is his relative ineptitude at picking pockets. This is my favorite bard class, as I never pick pockets, so it literally has no disadvantage in my eyes.

Mages

While these wizened adventurers are surely the weakest in the game at low levels, they become exponentially more powerful as they advance. A high-level mage can kill enemies with naught but a touch (finger of death) or cause a 40-foot wide cloud of acid to engulf his enemies (acid storm), for example. No party should go into battle without a powerful mage in back.

Wizard

The wizard is your standard, run-of-the-mill spellcaster. He can cast spells from any of the eight schools of magic, but cannot wear armor. Wizards can wield daggers, staves, darts, and slings. All mages can obtain a familiar - a small character that will fight alongside the mage. The mage gains a bonus of half the hit points of the familiar. However, if the familiar dies, the mage loses those hit points as well as a point of constitution permanently. Mages need high intelligence ratings to be effective. Wizards can advance to level 17 in Baldur's Gate II.

Wizard Kits

Wizard	The standard wizard is detailed in the previous section.
Specialist mages	If a mage chooses to specialize in one school in particular, he becomes a specialist mage. Specialists are identical to regular mages with a few exceptions. They can cast an extra spell at each spell level, and they cannot cast spells in their opposing school. Multiclassed characters cannot become specialist mages (with the exception of the gnomish fighter/illusionist).

Sorcerer

The sorcerer is a sort of wizard, but rather than having to memorize spells, the sorcerer learns the spell once and remembers it forever. As such, he can cast more spells per day than a run-of-the-mill wizard, but his spell library is also severely limited. Once a spell is added to the sorcerer's repertoire, it's there forever. Be sure to choose your spells wisely (see this guide's spells section





for advice), as you'll be kicking yourself if you waste a valuable slot on a spell you'll never use. All sorcerer spells are tied together by level. That is, while it may look as though you have six of each level 1 spell, you really have six level 1 spells altogether. (Casting a magic missile will also decrement your chromatic orb count by one, for example.) Also note that the sorcerer cannot use scrolls. Like wizards, only humans, elves, and half-elves can be sorcerers. Sorcerers can reach level 17.

Specialist Title	School	Opposing School
Abjurer	Abjuration	Alteration
Transmuter	Alteration	Abjuration and necromancy
Conjurer	Conjuration/summoning	Divination
Diviner	Divination	Conjuration/summoning
Enchanter	Enchantment/charm	Invocation
Illusionist	Illusion	Necromancy
Invoker	Invocation	Enchantment and conjuration
Necromancer	Necromancy	Illusion

Alignment

A character's alignment determines his or her ideological view of the world. There are nine alignments, each of which reflects a view of society and a view of the universe. Lawful characters believe in following the laws set forth by society, while chaotic characters choose to ignore the world's regulations. Good characters try to benefit the world through their actions, while evil characters care only for themselves. For example, a lawful good character will focus on ridding the world of evil, but will not step outside of the boundaries of the law to do so. Paladins must be of lawful good alignment, druids are true neutral, bards must be some form of neutral, monks must be lawful, and thieves cannot be of lawful good alignment for obvious reasons. Don't let characters from widely varying alignments make up your party, or they'll start to fight.

Abilities

Your character's abilities are what determine whether he is a meandering idiot who can bash a giant's skull in or a soft-spoken old man who could beat Big Blue in a game of chess. There are six abilities, and how high or low you are can roll in each one is determined by your race and class. Here are the required minimum values of each ability for each class:





Class	Strength	Dexterity	Constitution	Intelligence	Wisdom	Charisma
Barbarian	9	3	3	3	3	3
Fighter	9	3	3	3	3	3
Ranger	13	13	14	3	14	3
Paladin	12	3	9	3	13	17
Cleric	3	3	3	3	9	3
Druid	3	3	3	3	12	15
Mage	3	3	3	9	3	3
Thief	3	9	3	3	3	3
Bard	3	12	3	13	3	15
Sorcerer	3	3	3	9	3	9
Monk	3	9	9	3	9	3

It's a very good idea to get your characters as close as possible to 18 in all his class's important fields (the ones that require higher than 3) and pretty much ignore the rest. For example, a mage only needs an intelligence rating of 9, but if he has an 18, he'll be much more powerful. On the other hand, a mage with 18 wisdom isn't much different from a mage with 3 wisdom. Focus your attribute points where they're needed most.

Skills

Skills, also known as weapon proficiencies, are what determine which types of killing tools your character is adept with and which he has virtually no chance of success with. Fighters may gain proficiency in any area and can reach the fifth proficiency level (level 3 in missile attacks), at which point they are a fearsome sight to behold. Other characters may reach level 2, gaining a modest +1 bonus to attacks, while mages and clerics may only reach level 1. Using a weapon for which your character has no proficiency will result in a -1 penalty. Be sure to give mage characters some type of missile-weapon proficiency, as they'll die very quickly in melee combat!

Skill Points	To Hit Bonus	Damage Bonus	Base Attacks per Roll
0	-1	-1	1
1	0	0	1
2	+1	+2	1.5
3	+2	+2	1.5
4	+2	+2	1.5
5	+2	+3	1.5





Appearance, Biography, and Name

Half the fun of playing a role playing game is, well, feeling like you're playing a role other than that of yourself. Give your character a background - a life - separate from your own, or if you're feeling rushed, just go with the default bio and begin the adventuring!

What Makes a Good Party?

Ask this question of ten experienced RPGers, and you'll get ten different answers. Your party will largely depend on what NPCs you come in contact with over the course of the game. But there are some guidelines that you'd be wise to follow to stay alive.

First off, balance is key. A party of six mages isn't going to live long enough to advance very far nor will a party of six thieves or even six fighters. It just doesn't work. If your six burly fighters come across a powerful wizard who successfully casts hold person on them, regardless of their amazing dexterity or superhuman strength, they'll just stand at attention as they're bombarded to death by spells or by the wizard's minions. A good rule of thumb is to bring two to three fighters and two to three magic users as well.

A cleric or druid is a good idea to have hiding in the back of your party, lending aid or healing spells whenever necessary. Also, a rogue is a great asset. Having a thief to scout ahead unseen, disarming traps all the way, is invaluable. Or, bring a bard along to regale the people you meet with his tales. Bards are (in my humble opinion) a bigger help than thieves. In addition to conversing well, they can save you countless gold pieces and spellcastings because they can identify 80 to 90 percent of the unidentified items you encounter. Their bard song skill is a good help, as is their ability to cast mage spells.

Continuing our theme of balance, you should have several different weapon proficiencies as you look through your party. Don't make everyone proficient at great swords and missile weapons. That flail of the ages +3 might be really cool, but it won't help you at all if no one in your party can use it without killing himself.





Be sure to include at least one member with infravision (that is, don't have a party of just humans); it comes in very handy. Make sure that everyone will get along; don't have a lawful good paladin with a chaotic evil necromancer, or they'll do more than just have words once you've been adventuring awhile.

The bottom line is that there are no hard rules to creating your party. Create the party that you want to play and go with it. You don't even need to cart a party of six characters around (and you can't until you're well into the game); if you want, you can take three or four and advance to higher levels than you otherwise would have, since you're dividing the experience gained amongst fewer people. It's up to you. Just remember not to focus all your attention to one area: Bring a diverse group with you.





Chapter Two: General Tips and Strategies

This section will give you some basic help and reminders so your adventuring will be a little easier and just a bit less perilous. We will give you some tips that we have found that will keep you from slapping your forehead and yelling "Doh!" when you forgot to do something, or there was something you didn't know that you should have done. Some of these tips are very basic, but all will help you along your way.

Wear Helmets!

Helmets protect you from critical hits, which can be quite damaging. Make sure that everyone in your party that can wear a helmet does.

Do You Have a License for That?

When you get to Athkatla, save up 5,000 gold pieces and get the license to cast magic in the city. This is well worth the cost and makes your life much easier later on when you are openly attacked by baddies. Get 5,000 gold pieces and talk to the mage in the government main office.

Abracadabracalafragalisticexpialadocious...

It takes a relatively long period of time for spellcasters (both yours and those of your enemies) to get their spells off successfully. As such, protect your characters while they cast and smack down enemies as they try to cast. Make sure your fighters have a fast weapon they are proficient with, be it a dagger or short sword. This will let them switch weapons if they are fighting a mage that must have his spells disrupted quickly. Don't get scared if an enemy starts casting fireball at you; hit him with some arrows, and he'll forget what he was just doing.

Launch Your Missiles

Long-range attacks are a necessity, not only for disrupting magic users, but for getting damage in on opponents before they reach your party. Do as much





from afar as you can. Why go toe-to-toe when you can shoot your enemies and laugh as they pull arrows from their torsos? It saves a lot of downtime and the heartache of having to heal. Make sure that everyone in your group has some sort of missile weapon equipped at all times. When you can afford it, buy enhanced missiles, such as arrows +2 or arrows of fire; you can do a lot of damage before your enemies even get within melee range.

Pets, Pets, Pets

Need I say more? If you can summon minions to kill the monsters while you watch and collect the experience and money, why not? Use those elementals and servants. Cast that monster summoning III spell. If the creature you are fighting is really tough and wades through your pets, use the pets to slow it down while your mages weaken it with spells and your archers knock it down with arrows. Use your minions to keep monsters tied up while you use your spells and bows to knock them down. Doorways and bridges are great for this and can often turn the tide of battle or make impossible battles rather easy.

Know What You're Doing

Make sure you know the strengths and weaknesses of your enemies before engaging them. Don't cast ice storm on a group of cold wights. Fireball is much more effective. Refer to the enemies section of this guide for tips on beating individual enemies.

Save Often

Saving often may seem like an obvious precaution to save time if you die, however, there is more to it than that. Saving your game just before attempting to memorize a spell will let you reload until you successfully get it memorized. Saving before resting lets you keep trying until you get a peaceful night's rest, without pesky monsters waking you up. Of course, this can take away from the realism of the game, but the option is there if you need it. There's also an option (in the game options menu) to automatically give your characters the maximum hit point gain upon leveling up rather than rolling a die to see how much they get.





Maximize Your Inventory

You must quest through some dark, dank, long stretches of dungeons in Baldur's Gate II, and in your travels, you'll acquire tons of little goodies, many of them quite valuable. It'll be a bit annoying to travel back to town whenever your inventory gets full, so be sure to use all your slots effectively. Put scrolls, potions, and the like in your quick item slots and put any missiles (arrows, bolts, bullets, and so on) in your missile slots, even if the character can't use them. They're there, so use them for extra storage. Most importantly, take advantage of the new bags; they make your effective inventory size much larger.

Ask Questions First, Kill Later

Attacking everyone you see may sound like a cool idea, but the game rewards peaceful resolutions more than it does bloody ones. In some cases, you can effectively halt yourself in the game by killing a vital character. Never attack until you're attacked.

Use the AI Scripts

Unless you enjoy watching all your party members like a hawk for the duration of every battle, go to the character info screens, click customize, and choose an appropriate AI script. This way, when you turn on the AI, they'll have a chance of acting as you want them to. Of course, it's always a good idea to keep an eye on them while engaged in battle, as the AI isn't nearly as intelligent as you are. On a related note...

Know When to Turn the AI Off

There are times when the AI should just be turned off (it's the little icon just above the Rest button and to the left of the Select Party button). For example, if your mages are about to cast fireball and cloudkill on your enemies, you don't want Joe and Jane Fighter running in to attack the baddies, or they'll get hit with your death magic as well. In general, turn the AI on if you think the battle is going well; turn it off if you need to monitor the action more closely.





Loot! Pillage! Steal!

Whenever you have the opportunity to get something for nothing, do so. You can loot the corpses of deceased enemies, pillage from containers in the majority of locations, and even steal from your friendly shopkeeper with a little skill and luck. You'll get some of the most powerful items in the game this way, so don't pass it up.

Watch Your Step

Never forget to detect traps. This little tidbit of information cannot be stressed enough, nor can it be forgotten by adventurers. There is nothing worse than killing one bad monster only to have a death trap smoke your main character, forcing you to reload. You have a thief? Use him! A thief (or a bard) is an integral part of every party, and he is forgotten way too often. And on another related note...

Use waypoints! If you're not careful when crossing large areas, your party tends to scatter, and individual members may run into a horde of monsters. You wouldn't want your mage to walk through a pack of baddies by himself, would you? Didn't think so.

Certain Spells Demand Use

Don't forget magic missile. This spell is a great asset when you must do some surefire damage and disrupt enemy mage spells. It's great when an enemy mage casts mirror image, and you watch as your magic missile takes him (and the rest of his party) out in one shot. Breach is a boon. If that mage is just too protected for your fighters to get to him, hit him with a couple of breach spells and watch him tremble. You hate it when your enemies are protected from magic weapons, but you love it when that protection is breached. When fighting demons, don't forget your protection from evil spell. This will be a party saver that will surprise you for a level 1 spell. Finally, don't forget the farsight spell. It seems stupid, but if you have minions, you can see the monsters before they see your party, letting you send in your pets to do the work from a distance. Without farsight, you can't see past the normal sight range of your party.





Chapter Three: Weapons

What would a fantasy role-playing game be without some good weapons to hack up them bad monsters with? Like most other fantasy games, there are lots of different types and styles of weapons and lots of different methods of using them. This section will list all the weapons from the dagger to the two-handed sword and give you some general weapon uses and monsters they work well against. This is by no means the rule, but we'll give you some general guidelines to follow, so you can play more effectively. Each weapon has a class of damage assigned to it, be it crushing, slashing, or piercing, along with a speed factor that is used to determine how fast the weapon swings in combat. Some weapons are for getting down and dirty toe-to-toe with a monster, some are for standing back and raining down terror from above. No one weapon type will work well in every situation, so you are best off with your members having the skill to use a few different weapons so you don't get caught off-guard.

Axe Class: Slashing

The axe is the one of the more damaging weapons in the game, but it gives way to a big speed hindrance. This is the weapon that legends are made of and that dwarves stand behind as their weapon of choice. For you role-players out there, if you take a dwarven warrior, you will be getting very familiar with this class of weapon.

Battle Axe

The granddaddy of the axe family, the battle axe is a heavy hitter, but the speed penalty makes it so you just don't do the heavy hit very fast. When you see a dwarf leaning on an axe or swinging it at a monster, this is the axe that they swing. The damage of the battle axe falls around the same as a long sword, but the speed is closer to a bastard sword. Like a juggernaut, it's slow to get there, but it packs a punch when it does.





Throwing Axe

The dwarven missile weapon of choice, this little axe is balanced for the sole purpose of chucking it at monsters to part their hairs. Not a very good missile weapon, this one only lets you throw one per round, and the damage is that of a bow and arrow which allows two per round. You do the math on this one, and you will see that there are far better things to spend your proficiency slots on unless you are a die-hard dwarf role player.

Bow Class: Piercing

Having trouble killing a monster toe-to-toe? Well, get the trusty bow or crossbow out and shoot him from a distance. The bow and arrow is a staple to any party, and all your members should be proficient in one kind of bow or another. There's nothing like knocking a monster to half its hit points before it can even swing or shooting a mage from halfway across the screen when he is trying to cook you with a fireball only to have the spell fizzle on him. When your fighters are going toe-to-toe, and your mages are prepping spells, there is nothing better than having a thief shooting the dickens out of the critters on the side, out of harms way. The great thing about the regular bow is that you get two shots per round, while the crossbow will give you some heavy damage. Bows: Don't leave home without them.

Club Class: Crushing

A club is a club is a club. Need I say more? Pick up a thick tree stump, and you have a club. Or, have some smith make you a metal one. The damage is not that great, but the club is great for those nasty skeletons or clay golems. This is a good one for the cleric classes to get for that magic cudgel they can create with spells.

Dagger Class: Piercing

Picture a double bladed knife, and you have a dagger. Daggers are great little weapons that do little damage with lots of speed. When you must stop mages from casting spells, or you want to stab someone in the back as a thief, the dagger will get the job done quickly. Use your fighters for spell disruption, your thieves for backstabbing, and your mages for a backup. Those pesky critters





that get in too close for comfort should feel the edge of your dagger. Don't let the low damage scare you away; the dagger is a mainstay for any group.

Dart Class: Piercing

Your mage is out of spells... The monsters are getting close... Now what? Zing a few darts at them and hope for the best. This little weapon is not heavy at all on damage, but the rate of fire is great. You get to throw three per round, and they will definitely disrupt spellcasters and help out your front-line fighters. Get some magical darts and watch the hit points disappear.

Mace, Flail, and Morning Star Class: Crushing

These are the slots your priests live and (hopefully not) die by. These weapons run pretty close to the hammer class weapons, but with a little less speed and a little more damage. When you must face skeletons or clay golems, these are the weapons that you want in your arsenal. You want to use them without clunking yourself on the noggin. Spend a point in this class, and you will not be disappointed.

Halberd Class: Slashing/Crushing

This is one unique weapon in that it will do both slashing and crushing damage to your opponents. The bad thing is that you cannot use a shield with it, and it is slow, but the damage is great. This is a good weapon for that front line fighter that just wants to hit hard and doesn't care if anything is hitting him or for the fighter that has a well-armored friend to take the monster's attention away from him. A party can do without this weapon, but it is a great asset if you use it correctly.

Hammer Class: Crushing

Hammers are just that: hammers. They are one of the mainstays for the priest class and are also great versus the undead that priests vow to fight. They have about average speed and average damage, but other than that, there is not a whole lot special about them.





Spear Class: Piercing

Spears are what the hunters frequently use, and they will do what you need them to do, though not with any great effects. They do fair damage at an average speed, and the druid class can use them. The bad thing about the spear is that it is two-handed, and you can't use a shield with it, making the damage to armor class trade-off not very good. If you find a really good spear, use it; if not, skip the spear class.

Staff Class: Crushing

The staff is the mage's key weapon of choice and is usually shunned by most other classes. The damage of the staff is average, and its speed is a little better than average. When you picture a staff, picture a wise old wizard leaning on it to support his frail body. This is about the good of the staff unless you run across a particularly magical one, in which case, it is one deadly weapon. This weapon also works great against skeletons and golems.

Sword Class: Slashing/Piercing

Swords are the weapons that will lead your hearty group to victory for the most part. They score good damage, they have decent speed, and they are very reliable. There are many different magical ones in the game, and the only bad thing about swords is knowing which ones to excel with. Never fear, we will walk you through the pros and cons of all the different swords, then leave you to pick the style you like best.

Bastard Sword (Slashing)

A bastard sword is a sword and a half. This sword class is not used very much because of the low damage-to-speed trade off. The only difference between this sword and the long sword is the extra point of damage at the low end and the three points of speed you lose. It's not much of a trade off, if you ask us. If you want a one-handed sword as a warrior, choose the long sword.

Long Sword (Slashing)

This is one of the most common swords in the game along with the two-handed sword. It scores very good damage, on par with the battle-axe, and has average speed. This is a can't-go-wrong sword. The nice thing is that you





can use a shield while you hack away with it, so while you are dishing it out, there is less chance you are getting it dished back at you. There are lots of magical long swords in the game, so make sure your fighters can pick one of these up and use it without cutting themselves in the process.

Short Sword (Piercing)

The short sword is very close to being an oversized dagger. The damage of this pig sticker is about average, and the speed is good. The short sword is one of the thief's preferred weapons because he can still backstab with it, and the damage is a little better than that of the dagger. This weapon is another great weapon for the fighters in your group to know and love because it will also do the job of disrupting any spellcasting with its speed.

Two-Handed Sword (Slashing)

The two-handed sword is a monster. It stands about six feet tall and is as heavy as can be. The damage of this sword is equal to that of the halberd, and the speed is actually slower, but there are some really nice magical ones in the game. So, have one of your fighters use this monstrosity. With this sword, as the name implies, you can't use a shield for your armor class, so make sure you have someone using a long sword and shield up front to draw the monsters attention for you. Then, you can use this to hack the monsters to pieces. Walk tall and carry a big sword.





Chapter Four: Spells

Arguably the most important aspect of Dungeons & Dragons games is knowing how to effectively use your characters' spells. In this section, we'll dish out the details of every spell available in Baldur's Gate II. For each spell, we'll list its type, some strategies on when and how to use it, and a relative gauge of how important it is in the grand scheme of things. Following is a description of the various spell types.

Area damage	Spells that do area damage inflict damage upon enemies (and sometimes friends) in a certain area, usually a circular location.
Charm	Charm spells will cause your enemies to view you as a friend for a limited time.
Cure/heal	Curing and healing spells will essentially repair your party members.
Defense	Defensive spells make your characters more difficult to bring down.
Dispel	Spells of dispelling will negate the effects of other spells.
Hindrance	Hindering spells will not directly damage your enemies per se, but they will decrease your targets' effectiveness, for example, by slowing them down.
Imbuement	Spells of imbuement will bestow a temporary change of some sort upon your characters. For example, an imbuement spell could raise one of your fighters' strength rating.
Missile damage	These spells will shoot forward, damaging enemies from afar.
Summoning	Summoning spells will summon creatures to aid you in your battles.
Touch damage	These spells will damage anyone who makes physical contact with the caster.
Other	These spells resist easy categorization and don't quite fit in any of the previous categories.





As for a spell's importance, we've arranged them into five categories.

None	These spells are of no practical use. Memorize them only if you feel that you've got extra slots.
Low	Spells of low importance are better passed over for more useful spells, though they do have limited use if you choose to memorize them.
Moderate	Moderate spells are ones that depend on your style of play. Some people may find them irresistible, while others may despise them.
High	These spells should generally be memorized whenever possible. They'll come in handy often, and as such, you won't be wasting your spell slots on them.
Vital	Spells of vital importance should remain permanently in your memory. These are spells without which most magic users wouldn't dare leave home.

Wizard Spells

Wizard spells are cast by sorcerers, rangers, bards, and - you guessed it - wizards.

Level 1

Affliction

Type: Defense

Strategy: Setting the armor class only to six, this spell is a waste. As long as you have bracers of defense with an armor class of six or better, this spell will do nothing at all.

Importance: None

Blindness

Type: Hindrance

Ability: Giving the target an armor class penalty of four and giving a -4 chance to hit on their attack rolls, this spell actually serves you well and does its job. But it is nowhere near as good as a higher-level crippling spell. It is efficient enough when it isn't resisted and is generally only for use on lower-level monsters.

Importance: Moderate





Burning Hands

Type: Touch damage

Strategy: This spell is actually deceptively powerful. Burning hands starts with a rather low amount of damage, but increases to pack quite a punch. The downfall of this spell is that you must strategically position your mage so that he won't hit your other party members. The fact that the caster must be quite close to its target, which is very bad for a mage, practically negates any benefit this spell could give. Usually, we stick to magic missile for sheer ease of use.

Importance: Low

Charm Person

Type: Charm

Ability: Charm grants control of any one humanoid enemy to the player for five rounds. Toward the end of the original Baldur's Gate, most creatures resisted the charm series of spells. The same problem is present in Baldur's Gate II, so usually, you can't cast the spell successfully. Though it is never bad to charm a low-level creature to take hits during any battle, your journey in Baldur's Gate II will rarely take you to a human-like creature that is of a level low enough to be charmed. However, keeping one copy of the spell memorized is advised for the earlier portions of the game, for those times when you do run into a susceptible person.

Importance: Moderate

Chill Touch

Type: Touch damage

Ability: The -2 armor-class penalty incurred by chill touch is nice, but it doesn't offset the problem of bringing your mage into the fray. The damage is negligible (one to eight), and the two-point armor-class penalty is small, so we recommend that you either never use this spell or use it with extreme caution. Though some fire-based creatures are weak to cold-based attacks, the small amount of damage is almost never worth the sacrifice of your mage's safety.

Importance: Low

Chromatic Orb

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: Missile damage deals moderate damage that increases with the level of the caster, but it also has a secondary effect that will, beginning from the base level in Baldur's Gate II and going up, range from a three-round stun to paralysis. The damage that the orb deals is decent, but in the original





Baldur's Gate, the spell was mainly used for its secondary effect. However, in Baldur's Gate II, the spell is often resisted, and the special effect rarely comes into play. Still, it is advised to keep a copy memorized through the beginning of the game and try it out at times to see if it will get off. If it does, the stun or the paralysis effects are both extremely useful, as they immobilize the enemy and give you free hits.

Importance: Moderate

Color Spray

Type: Damage and hindrance

Strategy: This spell deals one to six points of damage and renders the target unconscious. Though useful in the original, it rarely affects anyone now. The other problem with the spell is that the spray can hit your party members and cause a messy situation. Unless you find yourself surrounded by masses of low-level enemies, it is advised that you stay away from this spell.

Importance: None

Find Familiar

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Summons a small creature to fight by your side. The caster gains half the hit points of the familiar as a bonus. Though you can talk with your familiar, and you gain bonus hit points, you will lose a point of constitution permanently if it dies. Though that is a risk we would never take, it's a personal choice. The hit-point bonus is fair, and the creature can give help with puzzles and combat.

Importance: Personal (low)

Friends

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: Raising the caster's charisma by a small amount, this spell is actually useless. Most often, you will never know what options could have appeared in the game had your charisma been higher. Since it is nearly impossible to know, it is nearly impossible to cast this spell in advance to reap the rewards.

Importance: None

Grease

Type: Movement hindrance

Strategy: Since grease will affect your party as well as your enemies, it is usually advisable never to use it when your party is in the area. However, one





efficient strategy is to cast the spell in the distance and pick off the creatures with range weapons. If this strategy is appealing, however, a spell like web or ensnaring roots is advised.

Importance: Moderate

Identify

Type: Other

Strategy: If you do not like spending the money to pay for identification or have not found the glasses of identification, one cheesy way to get all your items identified is to memorize this spell as many times as possible, rest, identify items, and repeat.

Importance: Moderate

Infravision

Type: Other

Strategy: Turn on group infravision under the options section, and the use of this spell flies out the window faster than cool air on a steamy day.

Importance: None, unless you have a party composed solely of humans

Larloch's Minor Drain

Type: Touch damage

Strategy: The one to four hit-point gain of this spell will be less than the amount of hit points you'll lose for wasting your time casting it. Since the player loses any hit points gained over the maximum after one turn, any practical use would be difficult to find.

Importance: None

Shocking Grasp

Type: Touch damage

Strategy: Grasp yields only a low amount of damage and forces you to bring your mage to the front line. The result is usually not at all pretty. Try to avoid this spell.

Importance: None

Magic Missile

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: This is the bread-and-butter offensive spell for mages. With the amount of missiles increasing as you level up, and the damage staying high at 1d4+1, this spell should occupy most of your level 1 slots. Also, it casts almost





instantly to disrupt other mages and do quick damage. There are simply no better all-purpose spells to take up the bulk of your slots.

Importance: Vital

Protection from Evil

Type: Defense

Strategy: This spell will become increasingly more and more useful. Not only is the spell a must for summoning minions, it will also protect you against many of the demons found in the later parts of the game. One particular battle comes to mind where there are hordes of demons, and casting this spell will let you turn the tide of battle from an impossible situation to an easy victory. However, if you happen to have a class like a paladin in your party, he will come with plenty of these as a special ability, so you shouldn't bother memorizing it.

Importance: High or low

Protection from Petrification

Type: Defense

Strategy: As the name implies, if there are petrification attacks, this will protect you from them. Though there are few times in Baldur's Gate II when enemies will petrify you, you could memorize this and rest once you've stumbled into a useful area. Otherwise, this has no use.

Importance: Low

Reflected Image

Type: Defense

Strategy: Creates a duplicate image that will disappear when attacked. It gives one free hit, but otherwise provides almost no help. Use mirror image instead.

Importance: Low

Shield

Type: Defense

Strategy: Setting the caster's armor class to four versus normal and two versus missile attacks, this is slightly helpful in the earlier parts of the game. Sometimes the best offense is a good defense. However, you'd be better off with a magic missile spell.

Importance: Low

Sleep

Type: Hindrance





Strategy: Sleep is useless. Though in concept, it does put the enemy to sleep, nearly every enemy in Baldur's Gate II resists it. Unless you need, for some reason, to take one gibberling out of combat, this spell will never help.

Importance: None

Spook

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: This is a cheap fear spell and, for the most part, a nice spell to keep your warriors from getting overwhelmed. When the monsters come in, cast this, and the monster must make a save versus fear with penalties or run off in another direction for three rounds. One of these in your memory banks can help. If you have a druid, however, cloak of fear does a much better job.

Importance: Moderate

Level 2

Agannazar's Scorchers

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: This is a fire-based flamethrower spell that will do three to 18 points of damage to any enemy. The nice thing is that there is no save. But on the downside, the jet will stay for a round or two, and anything walking into it will be burned, party members included. This is a good spell to cast when monsters are lined up. Just cast it on the one furthest away, and all the monsters will take the damage. The spell does not gain potency upon leveling up, so it will lose its steam as the game progresses.

Importance: Moderate

Blur

Type: Defense

Strategy: Lowering the caster's armor class by three regardless, this is a very good armor spell. The armor-class bonus will greatly help your mage's resilience and will let him stand up to much more of a beating. If you think you will be in an area where your mage will come under attack, casting this spell will greatly lower the damage he takes.

Importance: High

Deafness

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Forcing a 50 percent chance to miscast spells on the recipients, this spell is actually not useful. Though spells that hinder enemy casters are





always a help, it is a much better use of your time to use silence, as the recipients lose all ability to cast spells. In the end, silence does a lot more a lot faster.

Importance: Low

Detect Invisibility

Type: Other

Strategy: If your party ever comes under attack from any type of invisible creature, casting this spell will force it back into visibility. However, on your journey, you will rarely face invisible creatures, and when you do, they will become barely visible when they attack you. Unless they have used greater invisibility, you can attack them (with penalties). Also, you can easily cast dispel to get rid of the invisibility if needed.

Importance: Low

Ghoul Touch

Type: Touch damage

Strategy: Though the effect of paralysis is not shabby, to reap its rewards, you must not only move your mage into combat, you must hit the target creature with a melee weapon. Mages usually have a difficult time hitting, plus the target gets a saving throw versus the spell, so the spell is nearly useless alone. If you prepare your mage with good defensive spells like blur and mirror image, though, the effects of entering combat are not as bad. The paralysis effect is stellar when it isn't resisted, so it can be worth your effort to give it a try from time to time. When it works, it works well.

Importance: Moderate

Glitterdust

Type: Hindrance, other

Strategy: Though the side effect of revealing invisible creatures is nice, most of the time, the main blinding ability of the spell is resisted. Though this does reveal invisible creatures and should automatically take a place above detect invisibility, it is still nearly useless. Just use dispel for the invisibility and a more potent spell for everything else.

Importance: Low

Horror

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: This is a nice spell if you are getting overwhelmed by low-level enemies and need time to deal with a few of the enemies at a time. Horror





instills fear in its targets and will give you time to hit them when they can't hit back. Remember, though, that when the spell wears off, the feared creatures will be back in action. The monsters get a save, so do not expect them all to be affected. However, there are higher-level fear spells that can take effect on high-level creatures, get resisted less, and do more. For the level, though, the spell works acceptably on those lower-level creatures.

Importance: Moderate

Invisibility

Type: Other

Strategy: The invisibility line of spells is one of the best set of utility spells in the game. When any of your party members are getting low on health, cast invisibility to take him out of harm's way. If your mage is not needed at that moment, cast invisibility on him, so he won't take unneeded hits. Lastly, if you must scout out an area for enemy strength and numbers, this will answer your problems.

Importance: High

Knock

Type: Other

Strategy: If you ever find yourself without a good thief, or if you find a lock your thief can't pick (assuming it is available and not barred or magically warded - the game will tell you if it is), this spell will open it. If you do have a thief that is proficient at lock picking, this spell will not help.

Importance: Low

Know Alignment

Type: Other

Strategy: If you ever find yourself in a situation where you are not sure whether to trust or distrust what you are dealing with, casting this spell will help you. However, it is usually more beneficial to follow through and trust, even if you know it's a trap, as the result can lead to hefty treasure, experience, and even new party members.

Importance: Low

Luck

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: With a duration of only three rounds and an effect of only increasing the character's actions like saving throws and to hit chances by 1, this spell is pretty much a waste of time. If you ever find you can't perform an action, it





could prove useful to use this spell to compensate. However, we have never found a time when the spell could help. Spells like Melf's acid arrow and mirror image will be a much better use of your spell slots.

Importance: Low

Melf's Acid Arrow

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: Aside from the spiffy name, the spell has some nice effects. First, on impact, 2d4 points of damage are inflicted. From there, the acid deals 2d4 points of damage per round, with the number of rounds increasing with the levels of the caster. In other words, the damage is good, and the acid will stay dealing more damage over time. Though at later levels, the spell is resisted, it is very good in the early portions of the game and especially useful for taking out trolls and disrupting other mages.

Importance: High

Mirror Image

Type: Defense

Strategy: This spell creates multiple mirrored images of the caster, with each image absorbing a hit. In combat, this allows the mage some leeway to maneuver and helps him greatly. Who can refuse hits that deal no damage? Also, the number of images increases with each level, so the long-term value is high.

Importance: Vital

Power Word: Sleep

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: The spell will affect only enemies with less than 20 hit points. Suffice it to say, you will never need to sleep anything with less than 20 hit points - you will find almost no enemies at that low a level.

Importance: None

Ray of Enfeeblement

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Lowering the strength of the enemy to five, this spell works wonders when it isn't resisted. However, other than a few situations, most difficult enemies will have saving throws high enough to resist it. But, for the few times that they don't, keep a copy memorized. If you find yourself in an impossible battle, try casting this spell to see if it gets off. If it does, it will make your day.

Importance: Moderate





Resist Fear

Type: Defense

Strategy: Since this spell does not counteract magically invoked fear, it is practically useless. Since fear no longer occurs as a result of a tough battle as often as in Baldur's Gate, you will rarely have a use for this.

Importance: Low

Stinking Cloud

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Though this spell will affect friends and foe alike, this, like many others, works well when cast at a distance from your party. Once the enemies are unconscious, a barrage of missiles will take them out one by one. Though resisted by higher-level enemies, this works well into the game.

Importance: Moderate

Strength

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: Raising your character's strength to 18/50, this will let the character hit slightly harder. Overall, the effects are negligible and barely help since most fighters (of all types) are already at, near, or higher than 18/50.

Importance: Low

Vocalize

Type: Dispel

Strategy: Curing silence is easily done with dispel magic. Use that instead and save a spell slot. Since your mage cannot actually cast when silenced, he cannot even cure himself anyway.

Importance: Low

Web

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: This is another great spell to keep the masses off you while you fight a few enemies at a time. Web will create a large area of effect that will stop enemies from moving unless they make a save at -2. The -2 save means that almost every creature will have a difficult time resisting this. This is a spell to have in your memory banks as you go into almost any battle. But beware: You can get your own party stuck, too. So, this is another one of those spells best cast at a distance unless you're willing to risk your own party.

Importance: High





Level 3

Clairvoyance

Type: Other

Strategy: This spell will illuminate an area into view. It is quite a time-saver for scouting locations and, even though the fog of war is left on, you can glimpse bits of puzzles. Though it is useful at times, memorize it only when it's needed. For a look at enemies, try the farsight spell instead.

Importance: Low

Detect Illusion

Type: Other

Strategy: Though this spell dispels any level 3 or lower illusion, most illusions level 3 or lower pose little threat. This is an almost entirely useless spell.

Importance: Low

Dire Charm

Type: Charm

Strategy: See the charm person spell. This works in almost the same way, just with a better chance of not getting resisted. That makes this usable, but not a must-have spell.

Importance: Low

Dispel Magic

Type: Dispel

Strategy: Most spell-induced ailments and magic effects can be cured with a cast of dispel magic. Since the level of the caster in relation to the level of the spell being cured is important, have your higher-level characters use this.

Though this spell is very important to have around, paladins get some casts of this as a special ability. If you have one in your party, this can relieve some of the stress off the spellcaster.

Importance: High

Fireball

Type: Area damage

Strategy: Affecting a huge area with all creatures - friend and foe - in the area taking damage, this is a great spell to start a battle with. Before you move your party in, send a fireball flying forward to do some early damage without





your party being hit. The damage dealt is fairly high and increases with each level. This spell will stay with you for some time.

Importance: High

Flame Arrow

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: Much like Melf's acid arrow, this sends a flaming arrow at an opponent. Dealing 1d6 damage and 4d6 damage on top of that in fire damage, this spell packs a nice punch. With more arrows gained with higher levels, this spell will continue doing moderate damage for quite some time.

Importance: Moderate

Ghost Armor

Type: Defense

Strategy: With the effect of lowering the target's armor class to two, the spell can perform well. However, the effect is simply not good enough to warrant using it over spells like mirror image, haste, and fireball. If you feel you need more armor, give this a look. Otherwise, pass over it for any of the aforementioned spells.

Importance: Low

Haste

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: Of all the spells, this is simply one of the best. Doubling the movement rate and adding an attack round to everyone in the area, this spell will make the battle go nearly twice as fast. Killing enemies faster makes them hit you less. So, like many other spells, the imbued offense here is the best defense. Cast this before any difficult battle, then go in, hacking away. The single downside is that when the effects wear off, your party will be tired and drowsy. To compensate, simply cast it again during the next battle.

Importance: Vital

Hold Person

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: This spell freezes one humanoid-type creature in place, letting you do anything to it without consequence. Early in the game, when the spell is not resisted, it can work wonders against humanoid enemies. Later in the game, its use tapers off.

Importance: Moderate





Hold Undead

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: See hold person. Hold undead has the same effect, but since undead are easily warded with the clerical ability ward undead, it is usually easier not to bother with holding them. Also, undead are usually found in hordes, so the effect of this spell is negligible.

Importance: Low

Invisibility 10-foot radius

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: See invisibility. This spell has the same effect, but since this covers a greater area, it can affect more people. Whether this is beneficial or detrimental is dependent on what you are using invisibility for. If you are trying to shield a mage from being hit, for example, the lower-level invisibility spell works better.

Importance: Moderate

Lightning Bolt

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: Dealing a maximum of 10d6 damage, this spell packs a huge punch. Since the spell streams around the level, bouncing off walls, keep in mind that it cannot only hit multiple enemies, but also party members. If positioned properly, so that it never bounces back, it can be used very efficiently to hit many enemies for lots of damage. Putting this in a spell trigger works well, too.

Importance: High

Melf's Minute Meteors

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: Creating many small missiles that deal +3 damage with +3 fire damage that a wizard can throw at a very fast pace that increases with each level, these are nice to have against enemies like trolls. Since trolls take fire or acid to kill, sending one in to finish a troll is not only easy, but leaves you many more meteors for many more trolls. Otherwise, the spell is still good, providing a nice missile weapon.

Importance: High

Minor Spell Deflection

Type: Defense





Strategy: Protecting the caster from various spells cast directly at him, this spell works well enough. However, we advise you to wait until better deflection spells like the real deflection or minor globe of invulnerability. Though this spell won't absorb much, it can serve as a backup deflector to the other spells mentioned.

Importance: Low

Monster Summoning 1

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Summoning monsters to fight for the caster, this spell summons fairly low hit point creatures. Though some of the later summon spells are great to cast for creatures that absorb damage, these won't do much of anything and are just a waste of time.

Importance: Low

Non-Detection

Type: Defense

Strategy: If you ever run into a time when a creature could detect you as something you are not, this spell could be important. For example, if you have an invisible character, casting this would not let them be detected. However, we found that invisible creatures are rarely detected anyway.

Importance: Low

Protection From Cold

Type: Defense

Strategy: If you find yourself under cold attacks from spells, traps, or anything else, casting this will absorb 50 percent of all cold damage done through spells and all damage done by normal attacks to the target creature. This happens very infrequently in Baldur's Gate II.

Importance: Low

Protection From Fire

Type: Defense

Strategy: See protection from cold. This spell is the same, but works on fire-based damage.

Importance: Low

Protection From Normal Missiles

Type: Defense





Strategy: See protection from cold. It's the same and works for normal missiles like arrows or throwing axes. It does not include lightning, magic missiles, or the like. Since this does infer protection from a normal ranged attack, this is quite valuable under certain circumstances (against a cadre of archers, for example). Since the spell only effects one creature, though, you can only use it for your most valuable characters and only when a ranged attack is very harsh. Otherwise, it is faster to use other spells to end the damage.

Importance: Moderate

Remove Magic

Type: Dispel

Strategy: Affecting only opponents, remove magic will strip them of many armor and speed spells. This works well when both you and your enemy have beneficial spells cast, and you only want to strip theirs. Though you can usually simply cast dispel magic out of range of your party but in range of you enemies, there is little use for this spell. However, if needed, it will work without touching your party.

Importance: Moderate

Skull Trap

Type: Area damage

Strategy: Dealing one to six hit points of damage per level of the caster, this spell can do a lot of damage. However, since you must cast the spell and wait for it to be triggered by the enemy, it is often necessary to cast an area of affect damage spell that will trigger all the enemies. Once they are aggravated, they can trip the trap. However, this takes considerable planning and can fail, resulting in a messy situation in which you must trip the trap to get by. We advise that you simply stick with a more conventional, potent spell.

Importance: Low

Slow

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: The exact opposite of haste, slow decreases the speed of enemies. Casting slow will let you take less hits and have more time to work with the mass of enemies. This is a very efficient spell that is worth casting until it's resisted in the later parts of the game. Until then, it is a must.

Importance: High





Spell Thrust

Type: Dispel

Strategy: When in a mage battle, casting spell thrust will destroy any level 5 or lower enchantments. If you're in a tough fight against a defended mage, this will work wonders until you reach mages who use primarily enhancements of level 6 or higher. Keep a copy memorized in case a mage shows up.

Importance: High

Vampiric Touch

Type: Touch damage

Strategy: Draining one to six hit points for every two levels of the caster, this can pack a nice punch, with the maximum six to 36 points drained. This can definitely serve as a backup heal for the mage. Just keep in mind that if you need the healing badly enough to use this, it will require stepping into the heat to reap the effects - generally not a good idea. Make sure your mage is protected and use extreme caution. As your hit points are bound to be low when using this spell, a misstep will lead your mage to his death. Be careful with this spell or avoid it entirely!

Importance: Low

Level 4

Confusion

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Forcing affected creatures to wander mindlessly around, this spell works in much the same way as the fear line of spells. If you cast this on a group of creatures who are attacking you, some will be affected and wander about aimlessly, giving you more time to deal with the rest. It works well against dumb creatures with low wisdom.

Importance: Moderate

Contagion

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Lowering the strength, dexterity, and charisma of the creature it affects by two, this spell does very little. The loss in status will have little impact on the overall ability of the creature. Also, the spell is most often resisted.

Importance: Low





Emotion: Hopelessness

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: When the spell isn't resisted, your enemies will all lie down where they stand. However, it is usually resisted and not nearly as potent as other hindering spells like web or stinking cloud.

Importance: Low

Enchanted Weapon

Type: Summoning

Strategy: If you ever find yourself with an absolutely horrible weapon, this spell could help out. Creating a +3 weapon (mace, axe, long sword, or short sword chosen by the caster), the spell lasts for up to one day. We've never found a particular need for this spell though, as you can usually find better weapons with better abilities.

Importance: Low to moderate

Farsight

Type: Other

Strategy: A spell that often comes in handy, farsight reveals a portion of the map and clears the fog of war. This will let you easily scope out an area, then memorize and cast needed spells before barging in. It's very useful for the more difficult areas of the game.

Importance: High

Fireshield (Blue)

Type: Touch damage, defense

Strategy: Fireshield creates a flaming circle around the caster that bestows a 50 percent resistance to fire. However, it also deals damage to those who attack the caster. When used in conjunction with good defensive spells, you can turn your mage into a walking damage spell. Let him get attacked and watch your enemies suffer.

Importance: High

Fireshield (Red)

Type: Touch damage, defense

Strategy: This spell is the same as fireshield (blue), just with cold damage instead of fire. If you already have fireshield (blue), one is enough.

Importance: High or low





Greater Malison

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Greater malison has the amazing effect of lowering the saving throws of all those affected. This spell is one of the most strategic spells in the game, and with a cast of this, all the spells that are normally resisted have a better chance of getting off. Casting greater malison during any battle where enemies have high resistances will work wonders. Throngs of spells that were always resisted before now have a chance of succeeding.

Importance: High

Ice Storm

Type: Area damage

Strategy: Dealing only 2d8 damage and over an obscenely large area, this spell causes more harm than it's worth. With a 40-foot range, ice storm simply covers too large of an area to work well. Otherwise, it works in the same way as fireball, just with a larger area and damage that does not increase.

Importance: Low

Improved Invisibility

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: Much like normal invisibility, this spell shrouds the target from sight. The difference is that with this spell, you can attack while invisible. While the ability sounds breathtaking, you do become slightly visible when you attack. So, enemies can attack you, but have a much more difficult time with their attack rolls. The end result is that the invisible creature will be hit for less damage. For the purpose of attacking and gaining the attack roll bonus, this spell works well. However, for most other situations, invisibility works fine.

Importance: Moderate

Minor Globe of Invulnerability

Type: Defense

Strategy: Simply blocking all level 3 spells or lower, minor globe of invulnerability serves almost no purpose. Most damaging spells other than magic missile are easily higher than level 3. So, our advice is to wait for the normal globe of invulnerability, which works much better. If you absolutely must use this spell, cast it before major battles, and it be a little help.

Importance: Low

Minor Sequencer

Type: Other





Strategy: Letting the user store two level 2 or lower spells for simultaneous casting, this spell works perfectly as a battle opener. Before the your enemies gets their defenses up, cast the sequencer (from the Special Abilities section) and hit them hard. Or, use this to cast defensive spells immediately when a battle starts. Which spells you use is totally up to you. Lastly, the sequencer will stay with you forever, so you can store the spells, rest, and have your original compliment of spells plus the sequences. You can only have one sequencer at a time, though.

Importance: High

Monster Summoning II

Type: Summoning

Strategy: This spell is the same as monster summoning I, but provides a more powerful creature. Still, this doesn't summon a creature worth your time, so wait for monster summoning III.

Importance: Low

Otiluke's Resilient Sphere

Type: Defense, hindrance

Strategy: This spell has many many uses. Creating a sphere around the target that lets no damage pass through, this spell can be used offensively and defensively. Assuming the spell is not resisted, it can be cast on one creature out of a mob to let you deal with the others first. This spell can be cast on enemy spellcasters to prevent them from casting on you. Also, this spell can be used to shield an ailing party member. The possibilities are endless.

Importance: High

Polymorph Other

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: Casting this spell permanently morphs the target from itself into a harmless creature. Though helpful toward the early portions of the game for eliminating difficult enemies, the spell is totally resisted soon thereafter.

Importance: Low

Polymorph Self

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: Letting the caster turn into any number of useful creatures, this spell works much better than its counterpart, polymorph other. Conferring all natural protections and abilities of the form, this spell will let the caster deal considerably more damage as well as access some great special abilities.





Don't worry, the spell is not permanent. The special abilities of the forms are as follows:

- Gnoll - Uses magical +3 halberd with +1 fire damage; it's great for gnoll hunting.
- Mustard jelly - Gives a chance to slow an enemy with every hit (when it fails the save)
- Ogre - Gives a powerful fist attack
- Spider - Gives a poison damage with every hit
- Brown bear, black bear, wolf - None

Importance: Moderate

Remove Curse

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: If you ever equip a cursed item, this spell will cure you of its effects and let you get rid of it. Churches will also perform this for a small amount of gold.

Importance: Moderate

Secret Word

Type: Dispel

Strategy: Randomly dispelling one level 8 spell protection or lower, this spell works well enough for early mage battles. However, the randomness and the fact that it only removes one spell will send you looking for a better, higher-level alternative like ruby ray of reversal or breach.

Importance: Moderate

Spider Spawn

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Becoming better with higher levels, this summoning spell will spawn a spider or two. The spell starts out summoning a lackluster, normal giant spider, but gets very good at level 12, when sword spiders are summoned. Overall, this is a good summon spell that gets better as time goes on.

Importance: Moderate

Spirit Armor

Type: Defense

Strategy: Working exceptionally well, spirit armor lowers your armor class to 1 regardless of its current level. Working considerably better than all other





armor spells, this is the one to use. The use is the same as all the other armor spells.

Importance: High

Stoneskin

Type: Defense

Strategy: Completely protecting the wizard from a number of attacks, this spell is extraordinarily powerful. With more skins (number of resisted attacks) gained with each level, this spell's importance is obvious. If your party is jumped - and it will be - having your mages prepared is important. So, this spell should be on at all times while adventuring. With a duration of 12 hours, this spell can easily last between rests.

Importance: Vital

Teleport Field

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Randomly sending all enemies in the area a short distance away, this spell works incredibly well to confuse enemies, giving your party time for combat. Though not essential, it is a good spell to have around in case you get a surprise attack or find yourself overwhelmed.

Importance: Moderate

Wizard Eye

Type: Other

Strategy: Creating a moveable eye that will illuminate the map wherever you direct it and acting much like an expendable party member, this spell works very well for scouting out locations. However, since it cannot travel through walls or doors, it is not as useful at farsight, though it's used in much the same way.

Importance: Moderate

Level 5

Animate Dead

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Letting more and more undead be summoned with each level, this spell becomes quite powerful, especially when used with hindrance spells. Since skeletons are immune to most spells like confusion and stinking cloud, it is a good idea to cast any of those hindrance spells and move in with the skeletons, while picking off any remaining enemies with long-range weaponry.





Skeletons are particularly good against mind flayers, since they are not affected by this spell.

Importance: High

Breach

Type: Dispel

Strategy: Taking care of all specific and combat protection spells, breach is quite useful. Destroying spells like mantle, stonewall, and absolute immunity, this spell will be of particular help in any battle against a powerful mage. Cast it on a protected mage and watch as his protection defenses disappear.

Importance: High

Chaos

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: The effects of this spell are exactly the same as confusion. The only difference is that enemies of level 5 or higher, which is nearly all Baldur's Gate II enemies, will get a save versus the spell at -4 instead of the spell resistance being wisdom-based. The end result is that this spell will work better against higher-level enemies. However, it still will be resisted most of the time. Of the two, this one is definitely the one to use if you must.

Importance: Low

Cloudkill

Type: Area damage

Strategy: Dealing a small amount of damage each round to every creature in the spell's 20-foot radius, this spell can end up doing wonders when used strategically. For example, cast web away from the party as described previously in this guide. Then, cast cloudkill and watch as the helpless enemies take damage while they are held in place. Cloudkill will work just as well with any movement-hindering spell.

Importance: Moderate

Cone of Cold

Type: Area damage

Strategy: Dealing more damage as you level up, this spell becomes a true powerhouse. Since the direction of the cone is targetable, this spell is inherently easier to use than all the other circular radius area damage spells. In fact, this lets you target a group of enemies easily, from a distance, and without fearing for your group. It's definitely worth casting whenever you find





yourself up against a group of enemies, and that will be a very frequent occurrence.

Importance: High

Conjure Lesser Air Elemental

Type: Summoning

Strategy: This spell works just like any other summon creature spell, with strategies much the same. The only difference is that elementals can actually turn on their master and attack. So, to avoid that unfortunate occurrence, cast a protection from evil spell on yourself. In this case, the elemental has rather low hit points, so it cannot absorb much damage. Also, it barely helps in a fight, and the casting time makes the actual casting impractical.

Importance: Low

Conjure Lesser Earth Elemental

Type: Summoning

Strategy: See conjure lesser air elemental. It's the same, but this time, you summon an earth elemental instead of an air elemental.

Importance: Low

Conjure Lesser Fire Elemental

Type: Summoning

Strategy: See conjure lesser air elemental. It's the same, but this time, you summon a fire elemental instead of an air elemental.

Importance: Low

Domination

Type: Charm

Strategy: This spell lets the caster gain control of any creature that fails the saving throw. Otherwise, the spell acts strategically much like any other charm spell, such as charm person. In this case, though, the difference is that any creature can be charmed. Also, this spell is resisted much less and works incredibly well against most creatures.

Importance: High

Feeblemind

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Preventing the casting of spells, feeblemind works well when it is not resisted. Since the effect is permanent, if it gets off, you need not worry about





magical retaliation from the victim mage. Like any spell often resisted, it is much easier to use when combined with a lower resistance spell.

Importance: Moderate

Hold Monster

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: This spell works in the same way as hold person, just for all monsters. This spell is quite helpful, as it will let you attack the creature without retaliation. Though often resisted, the spell is most definitely useful. Again, use a lower resistance spell or greater malison beforehand for a better success.

Importance: Moderate

Lower Resistance

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Lowering the target's resistance to magic, this spell is wonderful. The effect is cumulative, so the target's magic resistance can be taken down from anything to zero with enough castings. With no saving throws allowed, this spell will always work and is sure to benefit the chance of every spell being successful afterward. It's a definite must for mage battles. You will run into creatures that will be nearly impossible to cast spells upon. This will save your day.

Importance: Vital

Minor Spell Turning

Type: Defense

Strategy: Sending every level 4 spell or lower back to the caster, this spell is a godsend in battles with creatures that cast pesky hold and confuse spells (like umber hulks). Working well in mage battles as well, this spell is useful for any low-level magical encounter.

Importance: Moderate

Monster Summoning III

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Like monster summoning I and II, this spell summons monsters to fight by your side. However, in this case, the monsters have very good amounts of hit points and do real damage. A must for tough battles, these monsters will take the hits, deal the damage, and save your party.

Importance: High





Oracle

Type: Dispel

Strategy: Dispelling all level 5 and lower illusions in the area, this spell has never done much. We've never encountered a time when this spell should be cast. There are only few times, anyway, when you will run into illusions that must be dispelled.

Importance: Low

Phantom Blade

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Summoning a +3 magical sword (that your mage can use) that also does +10 extra damage versus the undead, this spell is good if you plan on sending your mage into combat. Summon the blade and defend your mage with armor spells, and he will turn into a virtual fighter. However, keeping your mages back is usually the better strategy, as it is usually better to take advantage of their ultra-useful spells. That is what they're there for now, isn't it?

Importance: Moderate

Protection from Acid

Type: Defense

Strategy: Working like all other protection spells, protection from acid confers immunity to all acid damage. It's useful if you are up against a mage who likes Melf's acid arrow, but it's usually of no help.

Importance: Low

Protection from Electricity

Type: Defense

Strategy: Working like all other protection spells, protection from electricity confers immunity to all electric damage. It's useful if you are up against a mage who likes lightning bolt, or if you find yourself in an area with lightning traps. Usually, it's of no help at all.

Importance: Low

Shadow Door

Type: Defense

Strategy: This spell is useful if your mage is hurt. With this spell, the caster will be whisked away out of view for the duration of the spell. It works much like invisibility, but with a key difference: The only means of dispelling this spell is





to use a true sight spell. However, invisibility works just as well as a getaway spell and is available at a much lower level.

Importance: Low

Spell Immunity

Type: Defense

Strategy: Rendering the caster immune to all spells of a specific school, spell immunity works wonders once you know what your enemies are casting.

Usually, a choice of evocation works best (though the circumstances vary highly) and will shield you from most damage spells. It is definitely advised that, once you know what the enemy is casting, you should look the spell up in game or in the manual and see what school it is. From there, you can make an educated choice about what school to use for spell immunity.

Importance: High

Spell Shield

Type: Defense

Strategy: Creating a shield that prevents one dispel-type spell from reaching the caster, this spell can be as much a hindrance as a help. If any other type of detrimental spell is cast on you, it will be impossible to dispel that before dispelling this anyway. So, unless your mage is extraordinarily well-protected, it is advised to keep away from this spell.

Importance: Low

Sunfire

Type: Area damage

Strategy: Sunfire works exactly the same as fireball, with the exception of one important fact. Sunfire will not harm the caster. However, since sunfire still harms the party, it is difficult to use if your mage is not alone. But when your mage is alone, it is very easy to obliterate a group of enemies that are surrounding him. In essence turning your mage into a grenade, this spell opens up totally new scenarios for fighting packs of enemies. After some trial and error, sunfire works wonders.

Importance: High

Level 6

Carrion Summons

Type: Summoning





Strategy: Working like any other summoning spell, this spell adds nothing new to the crowded summoning circle of magic. Summoning carrion, which are not powerful or have many hit points, this spell is, in fact, worse than most other available summoning spells.

Importance: None

Chain Lightning

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: Chain lightning is simply extraordinary. Arcing from enemy to enemy, dealing damage that gets higher as you level up, there isn't much not to like here. As an added bonus, even if the targets make their saving throws, they are still hit for good damage. Usable whenever a group of two or more enemies is present, chain lightning is a must for the later portions of the game. Simply cast it on one enemy and watch as the rest get hit in order.

Importance: High

Conjure Air Elemental

Type: Summoning

Strategy: This spell is the same as the lesser version, just with a normal elemental summoned. These are increased in every way: more health, more damage, and, most importantly, more helpful. The same casting length problem is still an issue, and the greater forms of elemental summoning are still vastly superior.

Importance: Low

Conjure Earth Elemental

Type: Summoning

Strategy: This spell is the same as the lesser version, just with a normal elemental summoned. These are increased in every way: more health, more damage, and, most importantly, more helpful. The same casting length problem is still an issue, and the greater forms of elemental summoning are still vastly superior.

Importance: Low

Conjure Fire Elemental

Type: Summoning

Strategy: This spell is the same as the lesser version, just with a normal elemental summoned. These are increased in every way: more health, more damage, and, most importantly, more helpful. The same casting length





problem is still an issue, and the greater forms of elemental summoning are still vastly superior.

Importance: Low

Contingency

Type: Other

Strategy: Acting like a time-released capsule, this spell will cast one spell preselected by you once a chosen condition is met. For example, you can have a defensive spell cast on yourself once your hit points reach a certain level. Or, you can have an offensive spell cast when an enemy comes into range. Most of all, though, contingency can serve as a time saver and a nuance remover that will take away the pain of having to cast a defensive spell every time a battle starts. There are simply millions of different ways to use this spell. The use is entirely up to the caster and, hence, so is its value.

Importance: Moderate

Death Fog

Type: Hindrance, area damage

Strategy: Working the same way as stinking cloud, death fog creates a solid fog that deals eight points of damage each round to all creatures in the fog. The eight points of damage per round is definitely nice, but killing all summoned creatures gives it a nice niche all to itself. Since you won't be running into truly summoned, not gated, creatures too often in the later portions of the game, its use does wear off. A side effect is that it kills all summoned creatures. Otherwise, it works exactly the same as the aforementioned stinking cloud.

Importance: Moderate

Death Spell

Type: Area Damage

Strategy: Working marvelously against a group of moderately difficult enemies, death spell will instantly kill all enemies that fail their saving throw and have less than eight hit dice of hit points. Usually, whenever any group attacked our party, this was our lead spell. When it doesn't fail, it easily kills half the enemies.

Importance: Moderate

Disintegrate

Type: Missile damage





Strategy: Though instantly killing the target if it fails its saving throw, disintegrate has one key flaw. Some or all the target's weapons are destroyed. Though the spell can work against some of the most difficult monsters, assuming their throws fail, the point of using it in a tough battle is negated, as the loss of such great loot is simply unacceptable.

Importance: Low

Flesh To Stone

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: Working almost exactly like disintegrate, this spell will turn the target into stone. Once the target is turned to stone, one hit will destroy it. However, like disintegrate, all the target's possessions will be turned to stone as well.

That is simply unacceptable.

Importance: Low

Globe of Invulnerability

Type: Defense

Strategy: This spell is exactly like minor globe of invulnerability, except this one prevents levels 1 to 4 from penetrating. The same strategies apply as well.

Importance: Low

Improved Haste

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: This spell has the same effect as haste, but instead of adding an attack, it simply doubles the overall number of attacks. In other words, this spell is hugely more effective, save for one drawback. This spell only affects one creature. Unfortunately, that makes it impractical.

Importance: Moderate

Invisible Stalker

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Strategically, this spell works like all other summon spells. The invisible stalker, however, has a great deal more hit points, packs a good punch, and lasts for nine hours. It's definitely one of the best summoning spells around.

Importance: High

Mislead

Type: Defense, imbuement





Strategy: Creating a duplicate of the caster, then casting invisibility on the mage, mislead works as a perfect mimic. The real caster can still cast spells, but will be invisible. When the duplicate is destroyed, the caster will become visible again. Working both as a defensive and getaway spell, mislead can work wonders when the mage is low on hit points; keeping a copy memorized is advised.

Importance: Moderate

Pierce Magic

Type: Dispel

Strategy: Working much like secret word, pierce magic will cancel one level 6 spell or lower. The level hit from secret word (which dispels one level 8 spell or lower) is compensated with a 1 percent per level magic resistance decrease. However, the 1 percent per level decrease is not enough to outweigh the randomness and the level hit. Secret word already wasn't very good. It didn't need to get worse.

Importance: Low

Power Word: Silence

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Silencing the target with no chance of a save, this spell is exceptional. For three rounds, the enemy will be silenced (meaning he cannot cast spells). When you find yourself in a difficult mage battle, cast this repeatedly on the enemy, and you are nearly guaranteed to win. The spell should be used often.

Importance: High

Protection from Magical Energy

Type: Defense

Strategy: Protecting the target from 50 percent (randomly) of all spells cast on him, this spell will save you a lot of trouble against any mage. This spell is required casting in any mage battle, as the 50 percent spell resistance will save you tremendous amounts of pain. It's definitely one of the most important spells when standing up to a mage, and that will happen often.

Importance: High

Protection from Magical Weapons

Type: Defense

Strategy: Granting immunity to all magical weapons, this spell will make you invulnerable to most high-level enemies who only wield magical weapons.





However, the duration of only four rounds makes this spell completely impractical. Also, the fact that it can only be cast on the caster himself adds insult to injury. This spell may look good, but it is a waste.

Importance: Low

Spell Deflection

Type: Defense

Strategy: Absorbing ten spell levels worth of spells, spell deflection is an extraordinary spell. Another great spell for mage battles, the only downfall is that it can only be cast on the caster.

Importance: Moderate

Stone to Flesh

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: The spell is the exact opposite of flesh to stone. If you ever find a party member petrified, cast this on him to cure him. You won't find that happening often, though.

Importance: Low

Summon Nishruu

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Much like any other summon spell, this one's specifically for mages. A nishruu is totally immune to all spells, has no damaging attack, but with each hit it drains the highest-level mage spell out of the enemy's memorization. Though effective against mages, be sure you have damage to back up its ability.

Importance: Moderate

Tanser's Transformation

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: Transforming the mage into a fighter (complete with armor class, hit point, and damage bonuses), this spell works wonders if you need an extra hand at damage dealing. The use and importance is highly personal, but if you have nothing to do with your mage or need extra damage, it works wonders.

Importance: Moderate

True Sight

Type: Dispel





Strategy: Dispelling all illusions in the area, this spell can be useful if your enemy is a mage and has cast mislead or another beguiling spell. Otherwise, there isn't much of a use for it.

Importance: Moderate

Wyvern Call

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Much like any other summon spell, only this time, it calls a wyvern.

Unfortunately, wyverns are not particularly useful, so neither is this spell.

Importance: Low

Level 7

Cacofiend

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Summoning a demon that will go on a rampage, killing all who are not protected from evil, this spell can turn an acceptable situation into a disaster. Since the demon will attack your party and is impossible to control, chaos will ensure. The protection from evil spell will let you cast it safely, but it is still fickle.

Importance: Low

Control Undead

Type: Charm

Strategy: This spell lets you charm the undead. Since the undead are ever-present in Baldur's Gate II, this spell is extremely useful. Otherwise, it acts and works like any other charm spell (for reference, see charm person).

Importance: Moderate

Delayed Blast Fireball

Type: Area damage

Strategy: This spell is much like a fireball, except that this spell can be delayed until triggered. Like skull trap, delayed blast fireball will not cast until someone walks within range and triggers it. When it does, it will do 14d6 damage (with half of that, if successfully saved against), which is very hefty. It works well as a trap, but otherwise, it has the same problems as skull trap.

Importance: Moderate

Finger of Death

Type: Touch damage





Strategy: Instantly killing the enemy and doing 2d8+1 damage if your enemy saves, this is a win-win spell. Since it will kill the enemy outright or deal a good amount of damage, it is one of the best damage spells around.

Importance: High

Limited Wish

Type: Other

Strategy: This spell will summon your very own genie. When you do, he will tell you that you can pick either a permanent wish or a reoccurring wish. You can choose to heal your party, summon monsters to fight for you, or other such things. Be careful what you wish for, and make sure there is no way for your choice to go wrong. For example, to summon a horde of monsters to overrun your enemy will summon a horde of bunny rabbits. To ask for your party to be healed will heal your party about the equivalent of cure serious wounds spells. You can wish for magic items and get a variety of things, most being good. Your wisdom will play a large part in the results of this spell.

Importance: High

Mantle

Type: Defense

Strategy: Much like protection from magical weapons, this spell will shield you from weapon damage. In this case, any weapon +2 or lower will be ineffective. However, it also inherits from protection from magical weapons the duration of four rounds. So, it is, again, mostly useless.

Importance: Low

Mass Invisibility

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: This spell is exactly like improved invisibility, but works on the whole group. It has same pros and cons, strategies, and uses.

Importance: Moderate

Mordenkainen's Sword

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Summoning a floating sword (+4) that acts as a fighter equivalent to half the level of the caster, this spell acts much like an elemental. Being only equivalent to half the level of the caster, though, the sword will have rather low hit points and a somewhat difficult time hitting its target. Overall, this spell is an acceptable summon, usable in the same ways described for monster summoning I.





Importance: Moderate

Power Word: Stun

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Much like power word: silence, this spell casts stun with no saving throw. However, an added plus is that the more hit points the target has, the longer it will be stunned. The stun works the same way as a regular stun. This is an absolute must for later levels, especially boss battles.

Importance: High

Prismatic Spray

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: Working as an upgraded color spray, this spell has the same strengths and weaknesses as its cousin. The only difference is that this does more damage and has more special abilities. Still, it is difficult to use and often hurts party members. Much less risky damage spells are available, but it can pack a punch.

Importance: Moderate

Project Image

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: Working almost exactly like mislead, except that this image can move around and cast spells. The mage himself cannot move for the duration, but the spell acts just like a free life. Once this version of the mage is killed, the real version still remains. Otherwise, it is exactly like mislead.

Importance: Moderate

Protection from the Elements

Type: Defense

Strategy: This spell gives 75 percent protection to all elements. Otherwise, it is like any other "protection from" spell. However, most damage is not elemental, so this spell is still of little help. If you find yourself needing resistances, though, this is a nice spell to have around. Why get one elemental resistance when you can get them all?

Importance: Low

Ruby Ray of Reversal

Type: Dispel

Strategy: This spell works exactly like a secret word, except that it will dispel one random spell from any level. Otherwise, its use and ability is exactly like





an upgraded secret word. This is the definitive spell for dispelling mage protections.

Importance: Vital

Spell Sequencer

Type: Other

Strategy: This spell works exactly like minor sequencer, only this lets you use level 4 or lower spells.

Importance: High

Spell Turning

Type: Defense

Strategy: Much like spell deflection, this spell varies in that it sends the spell back to the caster. Also, spell turning affects 12 spell levels. Otherwise, it is a great defense for the mage and is the best turning spell. Since it sends the spell back to the original caster, it turns the hunter into the hunted.

Importance: High

Sphere of Chaos

Type: Other

Strategy: Performing any of nine different abilities, sphere of chaos forces everyone in the area of effect to save against the spell or have any of nine random events occur. Since the abilities range from healing to confusing, the spell is simply too random and unpredictable for any type of use. Since it can end up helping your enemy as much as hurting, there are really few efficient ways to use this spell.

Importance: Low

Summon Djinni

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Lasting for only a short amount of time and sometimes turning on the caster, the djinni is of little help. Of the summoning spells, this is not the one to use.

Importance: Low

Summon Efreeti

Type: Summoning

Strategy: This spell is exactly like summon djinni in every way, except that it lasts longer. Since it sticks around for a while, the efreeti can deal good





damage and absorb a great deal of hits. Overall, the one change from its predecessor lets the spell bloom. In the end, it is a decent summon.

Importance: Moderate

Summon Hakeashar

Type: Summoning

Strategy: One of the ultimate summons, hakeashar is an upgraded nishruu. However, this incarnation is immune to all weapons, has a mighty attack, and still has its special ability. With its ability and lack of a chance to turn on the caster, it is the single best summon against mages.

Importance: High

Khelben's Warding Whip

Type: Dispel

Strategy: This spell is like ruby ray of reversal and the secret words, except that it dispels one level 6 or lower spell and continues to do so each round until dispelled. Though it will not hit higher-level spells, using this followed by a ruby ray will knock out most or all an enemy mage's enhancements. This is the most powerful dispel spell for anything aside from the highest-level buffs.

Importance: High

Level 8

Abi-Dalzim's Horrid Wilting

Type: Area damage

Strategy: This is a great spell to take the place of the fireball and delayed-blast fireball. Dealing much better damage than these spells, it deals one to eight points of damage per level instead of one to six and does not max out. Hit a group of monsters with this at level 16, and you are hitting for 16 to 128 points of damage. Not bad for a single spell to knock the hit points off.

Importance: High

Improved Mantle

Type: Defense

Strategy: This is a good spell for when you are overwhelmed and cannot protect your magic users. With a cast of this spell, you cannot be hit by anything less than a +4 weapon for a few rounds. This could give your warriors time to get to your aide. However, it still only lasts for four rounds.

Importance: Moderate





Incendiary Cloud

Type: Area damage

Strategy: If you can hold the monsters to an area, this spell will do the damage. You get this at level 16, and it will do one to four points per level per round, so at level 16, you will do that damage for 16 rounds. Not much can survive that, but not much will just stand there and take it either. This spell is tough to use because if you misjudge, you will have some very hurt party members and some angry summoned creatures to deal with.

Importance: Moderate

Maze

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Do you have a critter that is just in the way while you are in a battle, or one that is doing just too much damage, and you cannot get organized to deal with it? Cast maze and watch it disappear. It will go to another dimension for a good deal of time while it tries to find its way out. It's a great spell because there is no saving throw. If you're in a solo battle, this spell gives you time to recuperate.

Importance: High

Pierce Shield

Type: Dispel

Strategy: This is another spell that removes defensive spells on enemy mages. The boon on this one is that it will reduce the magic resistance of the affected target by 10 percent plus 1 percent per level of the mage casting pierce magic. Otherwise, it's just like ruby ray or reversal and a secret word.

Importance: Moderate

Power Word: Blind

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: This word casts blind, but allows no saving throw. The small penalties bestowed by the spell do not do much at this high a level, though.

Importance: Low

Protection From Energy

Type: Defense

Strategy: Much like protection from the elements, this spell has its place, but you can do without it, and you should. The 75 percent resistance to the elements is not great when you can only affect one of your party members.

Importance: Low





Simulacrum

Type: Other

Strategy: Need another mage? Cast this, and you will create a duplicate of the mage that casts spells at 60 percent of the abilities of the original mage. You control this mage as if he was a party member, and he can cast spells extraordinarily well. He's great backup if you need that extra damage from an extra mage.

Importance: High

Spell Trigger

Type: Other

Strategy: This is a lot like the other sequencer spells in your arsenal. This one will hold three spells up to level 6 and shoots them all off at one time. This is a great spell and will let you do large amounts of damage in a short time, or you can get all your defenses up in one cast.

Summon Fiend

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Another pet spell, this one summons a gigantic demon to do your bidding. Arguably the best summoning spell damage- and health-wise, the only problem is that the creature can turn on you. Be absolutely sure to have protection from evil cast on yourself.

Symbol: Death

Type: Area damage

Strategy: To us, this spell is worthless. This will create a symbol that will kill any creature of 60 hit points or less if it fails a save. Unfortunately, there aren't many creatures you will be fighting at this level with that few hit points that will likely fail a save versus death.

Symbol: Fear

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Little better than the death symbol, this spell is still negated by a saving throw. We prefer to stay away from the symbol line of spells because of this.

Importance: Moderate

Symbol: Stun

Type: Hindrance





Strategy: Well, if you just have to use them, this is the one that is worth taking a chance on the save with. Again, even at a -4 on the save, we prefer to stay away from these spells.

Importance: Moderate

Level 9

Absolute Immunity

Type: Defense

Strategy: This is the last of the immunity spells. This one will keep all but +5 magic weapons from hurting the mage, which will give him time to clean up the area or vacate. Make up your mind quickly, you only have four rounds of immunity.

Importance: Moderate

Black Blade of Disaster

Type: Touch damage

Strategy: This spell is awesome if you don't mind sending your mage in close. Just make sure the critter you are battling is busy fighting one of your warriors. This spell will create a magical +5 planar rift blade that will do two to 24 points of damage per hit. It also lets the mage fight as a fighter of half his level, and if the monster fails a save, it is disintegrated.

Importance: High

Chain Contingency

Type: Touch damage

Strategy: This is one of those nice emergency spells. Chain up some heavy damage spells and a maze spell, and anything that makes the mistake of hitting your mage is damaged heavily and put somewhere for a while until you are ready to deal with it.

Importance: Moderate

Energy Drain

Use: Other

Strategy: This is one of the level 9 worthless spells. All this will do is drain some levels off the monster so they lose some hit points and abilities. Big whoop. When you are fighting monsters against whom this spell will actually do something, it won't do enough to make it worth the spell slot in your memory.

Importance: Low





Freedom

Type: Dispel

Strategy: This is a good spell if one of your party members has been imprisoned or mazed. Cast this in the area, and they will come back. I recommend not having this memorized; carry some scrolls with you for this spell instead.

Importance: Low

Gate

Type: Summoning

Strategy: This spell gives you the ultimate pet: a pit fiend. Again, make sure you have your protection from evil spell running, or you will have another mad demon to deal with.

Importance: Low

Imprisonment

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: This is one mean spell. All you must do is cast this and touch a creature to have it disappear forever with no save. This is a sure thing as long as your mage can hit something, but if he has a problem with that, this spell is worthless. Carry it in your memory; it won't let you down.

Importance: High

Meteor Swarm

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: This spell is not as big of a deal as it sounds. This will call down meteors in an area for four rounds, doing four to 40 points of damage per round, provide that the monsters stand in the meteor shower. Don't expect to get more than two hits because the monsters don't stick around. Would you?

Importance: Moderate

Power Word: Kill

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: This spell will instantly kill any creature of 60 hit points or less with no saving throw. Sure, most monsters are more than 60 hit points, but this will finish off any monster that you hurt.

Importance: High





Shapechange

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: This spell has some uses, but I prefer to keep my Mages as Mages for the purpose of casting real damage spells. If I want another pet, I will summon one. This will give a Mage the ability to change shape into a bunch of different monsters, and he will get the abilities that come with them.

Importance: Low

Spellstrike

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: This is an awesome spell to use against those mages that think all their spell protections will stop you cold. Cast this, and every one of the protection spells will just disappear, making the mage quiver in fear.

Importance: High

Spell Trap

Type: Defense

Strategy: This spell is good for those long fights that you know you will run out of spells in the middle of. Cast this, and any spell cast at you will be soaked up, and you can cast up to that level of the spell that was in your memory at one time. For example, if a mage hits you with a polymorph other spell, you will have four extra spell levels you can cast. So, if you had magic missile and fireball in your memory, but you had already cast them, you can now cast them again.

Importance: Moderate

Time Stop

Type: Other

Strategy: This spell does what it says: It stops time for all but the mage. The mage then has six rounds to do what he wants and cast what spells he wants, which can be devastating for the opposing forces. We love this spell and think every mage should have and use it.

Importance: Vital

Wail of the Banshee

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: This spell is good for large groups of monsters in the hope that one will fail its save. But, when fighting one or two monsters, it's worthless. Any spell that allows a save at this level is very limited in its usefulness, and this is one of those. We killed two monsters in six casts, and in each cast, there were





about four to six monsters in the area of effect. The effort was not worth it, in our opinion, when we could have used imprison and rid ourselves of six monsters in six casts.

Importance: Low

Priest and Druid Spells

Priest and druid spells partially overlap: Druids can cast all the following spells, while clerics can cast only those not marked "druid only."

Level 1

Armor of Faith

Type: Defense

Strategy: Absorbing a portion of all damage done to the caster and increasing with the level of the caster, this spell is a great, basic armor spell. Though it will taper off, it is useful and stays so. Cast it before any major battle.

Importance: High

Bless

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: Affecting all creatures in a certain area with bonus to luck and dice rolls, bless is another acceptable buff-up spell. The dice rolls will make a small difference in your combat abilities, and it's worth casting if you have the time before major battles.

Importance: Moderate

Command Word: Die

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: This spell renders a creature unconscious for one round. The spell, with no saving throw, gives you one free round to do as you will before the creature returns to normal. A lot can happen in one round.

Importance: High

Cure Light Wounds

Type: Heal

Strategy: Cast this spell on a hurt party member. It heals one to eight points of damage. For Baldur's Gate II, that amount is negligible. However, it is useful





to cut down on the number of hours spent resting, so if you find no other worthwhile spells, fill level 1 up with this.

Importance: Low

Detect Evil

Type: Detection

Strategy: Use this spell to find which creatures are evil in the area. When cast, a list will be made of all evil creatures. It's useful if you missed any enemies in a dungeon, and it's useful to determine motives and alignment.

Importance: Moderate

Doom

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Giving a +2 THACO to the target, this spell actually manages to lower the target's combat abilities a noticeably small amount. The -2 to all general rolls, however, will help with spells cast in the future on the target as well as your ability to hit the target. In general, it's a nifty, if small, spell.

Importance: Moderate

Entangle

Type: Hindrance - druid only

Strategy: This is another great spell to keep the masses off of you while you fight just a few enemies at a time. Entangle will create a large area of effect that will stop enemies from moving unless they make a save at +2. This is a spell to have in your memory as you go into almost any battle, but beware - you can get your own party stuck, too. So, this is another one of those spells to cast at a distance, unless you want to take the risk.

Importance: Moderate

Magical Stone

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: A great principal level 1 damage spell, magical stone creates a projectile that does one to four points of damage to the target. The one to four points of damage is irresistible and quite good for a level 1 spell. Obviously, one to four points of damage is not great, but at level 1, it is nice for a small punch.

Importance: Moderate

Protection From Evil

Type: Defense





Strategy: This spell will become increasingly more useful as the game progresses. Not only is it a must for summoning minions, it will also protect you against many demons found in the later parts of the game. One particular battle comes to mind where there are hordes of demons, and casting this spell will let you turn the tide of battle from an impossible situation to an easy victory. However, if you happen to have a class like a paladin in your party, he will come with plenty of these spells as special abilities, so you shouldn't bother memorizing it.

Importance: High or low, depending on party makeup

Remove Fear

Type: Cure, heal, and dispel

Strategy: If your party members are afflicted by natural or magically induced fear, this spell will cure them. Also, it will help them resist it for the duration of the spell. Since fear is a common effect of spells in Baldur's Gate II, remove fear is actually quite useful.

Importance: Moderate

Sanctuary

Type: Defense

Strategy: When sanctuary is cast, the target can no longer take any offensive or defensive action without destroying the spell. A wonderful spell if you find your priest low in hit points, it will give him time to rest up, heal, and rejoin the battle without dying.

Importance: Moderate

Shillelagh

Type: Summoning

Strategy: This spell summons a magical club for the caster. In Baldur's Gate II, you will have a better weapon than this will summon, so it is pointless and, actually, detrimental.

Importance: None

Level 2

Aid

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: The aid effect is nice, but the additional 1d8 hit points are pretty much negligible to anyone but a mage. It is advised that you simply stay with bless, which is one spell rank lower.





Importance: Low

Barkskin

Type: Defense

Strategy: With effects that increase as you level up, barkskin begins useful and stays useful. Eventually lowering your base armor class to two, this spell will usually be one step ahead of your ability to find better equipment. It's definitely one of the better lower-level armor spells.

Importance: High

Chant

Type: Imbuement, hindrance

Strategy: Raising all party rolls by one, and lowering all enemy rolls by one, chant is simple but pretty effective for a level 2 spell, having the same general effectiveness as a double-bless spell.

Importance: Moderate

Charm Person or Mammal

Type: Charm - druid only

Strategy: This spell grants control of any one humanoid or mammal enemy to the player for five rounds. Toward the end of the original Baldur's Gate, most creatures resisted the charm series of spells. The same problem is present here in Baldur's Gate II, so most often, the spell will never get off successfully. However, keeping one copy of the spell memorized is advised for earlier portions of the game for those times when you do run into a person or mammal susceptible to charm.

Importance: Moderate

Draw Upon Holy Might

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: Gaining power as you level up, this spell will increase strength, constitution, and dexterity by one point for every three levels of the caster. In the later portions of the game, this spell can take your stats to godlike numbers and will give substantial bonuses. As you progress, this spell becomes increasingly important and will play a key role in making your priest one of your best all-around party members.

Importance: Vital

Find Traps

Type: Other





Strategy: Just like the thief's ability, this spell will let you locate traps. If you have a thief in your party (and you should), this spell is useless. If you don't, this spell is a must for dungeons.

Importance: Low or high, depending on party makeup

Flame Blade

Type: Summoning

Strategy: This spell summons a blade of flame (1d4+4) for the caster to use; this spell is especially good against trolls. As its name suggests, the blade is made of flame and will hence kill trolls. Otherwise, its damage and bonuses against the undead are actually quite nice and may be better than the weapon you have for the first bits of the game.

Importance: Moderate

Goodberry

Type: Cure, heal, and summoning - druid only

Strategy: Healing one point of damage, goodberries aren't so tasty (excuse the pun). Truly one point of damage is as inconsequential as it gets. Don't bother with this spell.

Importance: None

Hold Person

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: This spell freezes one humanoid creature in place, letting you do anything to it without consequence. Early in the game, when the spell is not resisted, it can work wonders against humanoid enemies. Later in the game, its use tapers off.

Importance: Moderate

Know Alignment

Type: Other

Strategy: If you ever find yourself in a situation where you are not sure whether to trust or not to trust those with whom you are dealing, casting this spell will answer it. However, it is usually more beneficial to follow through and trust, even if you know it's a trap, as the result can lead to hefty treasure, experience, and even new party members.

Importance: Low

Resistance to Fire and Cold

Type: Defense





Strategy: If you find yourself under cold or fire attacks from spells, traps, or anything else, casting this will absorb 50 percent of all cold and fire damage. This happens very infrequently in Baldur's Gate II and is only usable under select circumstances.

Importance: Low

Silence, 15-foot Radius

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Casting silence will prevent enemy spellcasters from casting. A most efficient spell, but it's resisted most of the time. If you are not too far into the game, keep a copy memorized and see if it will affect anyone. If so, the cast will be well worth your time.

Importance: Moderate

Slow Poison

Type: Cure, Heal

Strategy: In Baldur's Gate II, most poisons will require a more potent spell to neutralize the poison. However, this spell will slow the poison. Use it only as a backup if all other poison cures are unavailable.

Importance: Low

Spiritual Hammer

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Summoning a magical hammer that will be +2 or +3, it is entirely up to you whether it is worth it or not. If your weapon is not as good, casting spiritual hammer will help. If your weapon is better, there is no point. You will most likely have a better weapon soon enough.

Importance: Low

Level 3

Animate Dead

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Letting more undead be summoned with each level, this spell becomes quite powerful, especially when used with hindrance spells. Since skeletons are immune to most spells like confusion and stinking cloud, it is a good idea to cast any of those hindrance spells, then move in on the skeletons while picking off the remaining enemies with long-range weaponry. Skeletons are particularly good against mind flayers, since they are not affected by their spells.





Importance: High

Call Lightning

Type: Missile damage - druid only

Strategy: This spells calls down one bolt of lightning that deals two to eight +1d8 points of damage per turn per level of experience. At higher levels, a very good amount of damage can be done, but it is often resisted. Also, the fact that this spell can only be cast outside makes it nearly impossible to use.

Importance: Low

Cure Disease

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: If a party member is affected by disease, blindness, or deafness, casting this spell will cure him. Since this will happen often, this spell is very useful.

Importance: High

Cure Medium Wounds

Type: Heal

Strategy: Cast this spell on a hurt party member. This spell heals 14 points of damage. For Baldur's Gate II, that amount is small. However, it is useful to cut down on hours of rest, so if you find no better spells, fill up level 2 with this.

Importance: Low

Dispel Magic

Type: Dispel

Strategy: Most spell-induced ailments and magic effects can be cured with a cast of dispel magic. Since the level of the caster in relation to the level of the spell being cured is important, have your higher-level characters use this.

Though this spell is very important to have around, paladins get some casts of this as a special ability. If you have one in your party, this can relieve some of the stress off the spellcaster.

Importance: High or low, depending on party makeup

Glyph of Warding

Type: Defense

Strategy: Used to protect a door or chest from entry, glyph of warding is of no use in Baldur's Gate II, as NPCs do not touch doors or chests.

Importance: None





Hold Animal

Type: Hindrance - druid only

Strategy: This spell freezes one animal-type creature in place, letting you do anything to it without consequence. Early in the game, when the spell is not resisted, it could work wonders against animal enemies, but there are none. Later in the game, when you begin to run into animals of some consequence, its effectiveness tapers off, making it all but useless in Baldur's Gate II.

Importance: Low

Holy Smite

Type: Area damage

Strategy: Dealing one to four points of damage per level of the caster to all evil creatures in the area of effect with a save for half, this spell will do tremendous amounts of damage at higher levels. This spell works especially well against the undead, sometimes killing a whole pack in a single casting. Otherwise, your group is easy prey to any pack of evil creatures.

Importance: High

Invisibility Purge

Type: Dispel

Strategy: If your party ever comes under attack from any type of invisible creature, casting this spell will force it back into visibility. However, on your journey, you will rarely face invisible creatures, and when you do, they will become barely visible when they attack you. Unless they have used greater invisibility, you can attack them from there (though your party will attack at a penalty). Also, you can easily cast dispel to rid the creature of the invisibility if needed.

Importance: Low

Miscast Magic

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Forcing an 80 percent chance of failure on the spellcasting ability of the target, this spell works wonders at disrupting chain casting. One problem is that it is often resisted. Another is that it only lasts one turn. However, if it gets off, this causes hell for any spellcaster's casting.

Protection from Fire

Type: Defense

Strategy: If you find yourself under fire attacks from spells, traps, or anything else, casting this will absorb 80 percent of all fire damage taken. This happens





very infrequently in Baldur's Gate II and can only be used in a select few situations.

Importance: Low

Remove Curse

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: If you ever equip a cursed item, this spell will cure you of its effects and let you get rid of it. Churches will also perform this for a small amount of gold.

Importance: Moderate

Remove Paralysis

Type: Cure

Strategy: If you find yourself under paralysis, casting this will remove its effect. This happens very infrequently in Baldur's Gate II and can only be used in a select few situations. Churches will also perform this for a small amount of gold.

Importance: Moderate

Rigid Thinking

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: This is a nice spell if you are getting overwhelmed by low-level enemies and need time to deal with a few enemies at a time. Rigid thinking sends the target wandering, confused, or randomly attacking and will give you time to hit the other creatures or the target while it can't hit back. Remember, though, that when the spell wears off, the creature will be back in action. The monster gets a save, so it can resist. However, there are higher-level fear spells that can take effect on high-level creatures, get resisted less, and do more. For the level, though, the spell works acceptably on those lower-level creatures.

Importance: Moderate

Strength of One

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: Giving the entire party 18/76 strength, this can help and hurt. First, all your party members can gain strength to 18/76 if it is less than that level. If their strength is higher, though, they lose strength down to 18/76. If the majority of your party is weak, this spell can work wonders for battling. You will, however, find girdles like the girdle of hill giant strength that will help out





where you need it most, so that you don't need to keep casting this spell. Remember, once you have said girdles, this spell will actually hurt.
Importance: Moderate

Summon Insects

Type: Area damage, hindrance - druid only

Strategy: Rather an all-in-one spell, this spell summons a swarm of insects that deals one damage every two seconds for seven rounds. Also, the target suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls and a +2 penalty to armor class. Most importantly, this spell also confers a 50 percent chance of spell failure on the target. Though the damage is negligible, all the other effects add up to make this a decent spell. However, the spell will become resisted quickly. So use it while it lasts, then move on.

Importance: Moderate

Unholy Blight

Type: Area Damage

Strategy: See holy smite. This spell works exactly the same way, except that the damage is against good creatures. If you are an evil character and plan on killing shopkeepers and other good creatures, this spell could serve you well. However, most will play the game by the rules and be fighting evil. So, it is of little use to most.

Importance: Low

Zone of Sweet Air

Type: Dispel

Strategy: This spell clears the area of all vapor-based effects like cloudkill and grease. Since enemy wizards have a lovely knack of casting these types of things all the time, this spell is extremely useful. Keep a copy or two memorized and dispel those vapor area affect spells as soon as you can. It will save you immeasurable amounts of health and frustration.

Importance: High

Level 4

Animal Summoning I

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Like the mage series of monster-summoning spells, this summons spell animals to fight for the caster. It does, however, summon fairly low hit point creatures that do almost no damage. Though some of the later summon





spells are great to cast for creatures that absorb damage, this won't do much of anything and is just a waste of time.

Importance: Low

Call Woodland Beings

Type: Summoning - druid only

Strategy: Call woodland beings summons a nymph to help the party. Though nymphs make fairly lackluster fighters, they have a few spells at their disposal and can heal, confuse, and dominate enemies. If you need more spells, she may be worth summoning, but by the middle of Baldur's Gate II, the nymph's spells do almost nothing. Since she can't fight well, she loses any importance and is quickly not worth casting.

Importance: Low

Cause Serious Wounds

Type: Touch damage

Strategy: Since priests can wear most armor, they can naturally double as fighters. So, though touch damage spells are abysmal for mages, they serve to boost the already competent fighting abilities of the priest. For these spells, you must wait until you are attacking an enemy worth casting this spell on. Then, once you are out of harm's way, and the target is concentrating on attacking another party member, cast this spell. Once cast, you have two rounds to successfully hit the enemy. Once you do, this spell will deal 17 points of damage to it (with no saving throw). If you don't hit it, though, the spell will be wasted. So, make sure your priest has good enough weapons, and you are in a position to hit. All in all, if used correctly, cause serious wounds, like the rest of the line of priest touch spells, is extraordinary.

Importance: High

Cloak of Fear

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Like the mage spell horror in effect, cloak of fear creates a magical cloak around the caster that will instill fear within a three-foot radius of the caster. This is a nice spell if you are getting overwhelmed by low-level enemies and need time to deal with a few of the enemies at a time, as it will give you time to hit them when they can't hit back. Since the cloak moves with the caster, this spell will also help alleviate the pressure on the front lines. Remember, though, that when the spell wears off, the terrified creatures will be back in action. The monsters get a save, so do not expect them all to be affected. However, there are higher-level fear spells that can take effect on





higher-level creatures, get resisted less, and have a longer effect. For the level, though, the spell works acceptably on those lower-level creatures.

Importance: Moderate

Cure Serious Wounds

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: Cast it on a hurt party member. This spell heals 17 points of damage. For Baldur's Gate II, that amount is acceptable and can be used outside of combat to heal the party back to full strength. However, the spell is also useful to cut down on hours of rest, so if you find no other spells, fill up level 4 with it.

Importance: High

Death Ward

Type: Defense

Strategy: This spell grants the target protection from spells like disintegrate, power word: kill, death spell, and finger of death. Since higher-level mages use these types of necromantic spells often, death ward becomes increasingly needed at higher levels. Once you start seeing these types of spells cast on you, you may want to keep a copy of death ward memorized to protect your most fragile party member. The downfall is that it only affects one creature, so it is impractical to defend the entire party.

Importance: Moderate

Defensive Harmony

Type: Defense

Strategy: Granting a +2 bonus to the armor class of all party members within ten feet of the target, defensive harmony can turn good fighters into untouchable instruments of death. A two-point bonus to armor class should not be underestimated and will help at all times in the game. Since this spell affects an area, one cast will benefit the entire party. Overall, it's very useful in any and all battles.

Importance: High

Farsight

Type: Other

Strategy: This spell is identical to the wizard spell of the same name. Farsight is a spell that often comes in handy, revealing a portion of the map and clearing the fog of war. This will let you easily scope out an area and





memorize and cast needed spells before barging in. It's very useful for the more difficult areas of the game.

Importance: High

Free Action

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: Working in much the same way as dispel magic, free action dispels all movement-hindering spells. That includes those that dispel but will not free, like web and paralysis. Overall, one copy of this spell must be memorized for the times for when these spells are cast on your party. In general, though dispel magic will clear many spells, it will not clear everything. Free action is one of the spells that pick up what's left.

Importance: High

Holy Power

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: Giving the caster 18/00 strength, an increase to THAC0, and additional hit points, holy power will help your priest act a bit more like a fighter. If you already have high strength, though, the main use of this spell has been negated. So, if you need the help, use it. Otherwise, go for a spell that will bestow a few more bonuses.

Importance: Low

Lesser Restoration

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: The wonder spell for vampire hunting, lesser restoration will annul most energy-drain effects like drain level. Since these are extremely common when hunting vampires, and hunting vampires is itself very common, a copy of this should be memorized at all times.

Importance: High

Mental Domination

Type: Charm

Strategy: This spell lets the caster gain control of any creature that fails its saving throw. Otherwise, the spell acts strategically much like any other charm spell, such as charm person or mammal. In this case, though, the difference is that any creature can be charmed. Also, this spell is resisted much less and works incredibly well against most low- to mid-level creatures.

Importance: Moderate





Negative Plane Protection

Type: Defense

Strategy: Bestowing partial protection to undead and spells like drain level, negative plane protection only works when fighting creatures like vampires. Though the thought of never worrying about drain level is nice, this spell only affects one creature. Since vampires have a nasty habit of attacking everyone, it serves little purpose.

Importance: Low

Neutralize Poison

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: In Baldur's Gate II, most poisons will require a potent spell to neutralize them, and this spell is your best bet. Not only will it dispel the poison, it will heal a few hit points. It will even cure blindness and deafness. It's a four-in-one spell and comes in handy all the time.

Importance: High

Poison

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: Dealing continuous damage that gets more potent and has a longer duration as the caster levels up, poison packs a good punch when it is cast successfully. However, poison seems to be one of the easiest spells to resist. So, unless you use a magic resistance decreasing spell, poison can't do anything at all. If you do use it, try to find a very potent damage-over-time spell that is great to start a battle with, then follow it up with other damaging spells.

Importance: Moderate

Protection from Evil, 10-foot Radius

Type: Defense

Strategy: Like a normal protection from evil spell, this spell will become increasingly more useful. The difference between the two is that this one's range is ten feet instead of one. Not only is it a must for summoning minions, it will protect you against many demons found in the later parts of the game. One particular battle comes to mind where there are hordes of demons, and casting this spell will let you turn the tide of battle from an impossible situation to an easy victory. However, if you happen to have a class like a paladin in your party, he will come with plenty of normal protection from evil spells as his special ability. So, if you value the range boost, this spell is worth it. Otherwise, stick to the normal paladin ability.





Importance: Low or high, depending on party makeup

Protection from Lightning

Type: Defense

Strategy: Working like all other protection spells, protection from lightning confers immunity to all electric damage. It's useful if you are up against a mage who likes lightning bolt, or if you find yourself in an area with lightning traps, but usually, it's of no help at all.

Importance: Low

Level 5

Animal Summoning II

Type: Summoning

Strategy: This spell is like animal summoning I, except that the creatures are more powerful. Still, this doesn't summon a creature worth your time, so wait for animal summoning III.

Importance: Low

Cause Critical Wounds

Type: Touch damage

Strategy: Much like cause serious wounds, this spell is a touch damage spell that will do 27 points of damage. Like its earlier incarnation, touch damage spells are abysmal for mages, but they serve to boost the already competent fighting abilities of the priest. For these spells, you must wait until you are attacking an enemy worth casting this spell on. Then, once you are out of harm's way, and the target is concentrating on attacking another party member, cast this spell. Once cast, you have two rounds to successfully hit the enemy. Once you do, this spell will deal 27 points of damage to it with no saving throw. If you don't hit it, though, the spell will be wasted. So, make sure your priest has a good enough weapon, and you are in a position to hit. All in all, if used correctly, cause critical wounds, like the rest of the line of priest touch spells, is extraordinary.

Importance: High

Chaotic Commands

Type: Defense

Strategy: Granting immunity to spells like charm, domination, command, sleep, and confusion, chaotic commands the protection form of free action. Instead of curing, it prevents. However, like many armor spells, it only affects





one creature. For everyday party use, that simply isn't good enough. If you find yourself under duress, though, casting this on your main spellcaster will ensure that he is unaffected, so he can proceed to cure the rest of the party with free action.

Importance: Moderate

Cure Critical Wounds

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: Cast on a hurt party member, this spell heals 27 points of damage. For Baldur's Gate II, that amount is decent and can be used outside of combat to heal the party back to full strength. If needed, cure critical wounds can even serve as a backup in-battle heal. Also, the spell is useful to cut down on hours of rest, so if you find no other spells, fill up level 5 with it.

Importance: High

Champion's Strength

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: An upgrade to holy power, this spell gives the caster 18/00 strength and a large bonus to THAC0. However, unlike holy power, which helps your priest act a bit more like a fighter, this spell will disable spellcasting for the length of the spell. In essence, champion's strength kills your priest's abilities and is much worse than its lower-level equivalent. Stick with holy power.

Importance: None

Flame Strike

Type: Damage

Strategy: One of the crowning priest damage spells, flame strike will deal 1d8 damage per level. Even if it is resisted, it will still deal half damage. At higher levels, flame strike will do upward of 50 points of damage and packs a serious punch. Always keep this spell memorized and always use it as one of your main damage spells.

Importance: Vital

Greater Command

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: Identical to the level 1 spell command, this spell will incapacitate the target. However, greater command will incapacitate the target for one round per level of the caster. At higher levels, this will serve to take a creature out of combat completely. However, the spell is often resisted, so make sure to lower the target's magic resistance before casting it.





Importance: High

Insect Plague

Type: Damage, hindrance - druid only

Strategy: Like its level 3 cousin, insect plague is rather an all-in-one spell.

Now, this spell also confers a 100 percent spell failure rate on the target. Also, it has a chance of instilling fear in your enemies. Lastly, though the damage is still negligible at one point every two seconds, all the other effects add up to make this a good spell. However, the spell will also become resisted quickly. So, use it while it lasts, then move on.

Importance: Moderate

Iron Skin

Type: Defense - druid only

Strategy: Much like the wizard spell stoneskin, iron skin completely protects the priest from a number of normal physical attacks. With more skins (number of resisted attacks) gained with each level, this spell's importance is obvious. If your party is jumped, and it will be, having your party well defended is important. So, this spell should be on at all time while adventuring. With a duration of 12 hours, this spell can last between rests.

Importance: Vital

Magic Resistance

Type: Defense

Strategy: Giving a 2 percent magic resistance per level to the target, this spell will bestow an exceptional magic resistance bonus to the target. One good strategy is to cast this spell on a fighter that already has a good magic resistance. With this spell cast, he will be nearly untouchable. Then, send him right into a group of enemies and wait for them to cast all their major spells (which are always cast first). Then, run him back to the rest of the group and slaughter your enemies. If that's too much to do, then the spell isn't great. With only one creature affected, it is impractical, like so many others.

Importance: Moderate

Mass Cure

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: Healing all party members hit points 1d8+1 per level, this spell is great during the middle of a battle when the whole party is hurt. Cast it, and everyone will recover a good amount of hit points. In the end, it will save your party and will keep all your party members in good shape.





Importance: High

Pixie Dust

Type: Imbuement - druid only

Strategy: Like a poor man's mass invisibility, pixie dust will make all creatures in an area invisible. The invisibility line of spells is one of the best set of utility spells in the game. When any of your party members is getting low on health, cast pixie dust to take him out of harm's way. If your mage is not needed at that moment, make him invisible, so he won't take unneeded hits. Lastly, if you must scout out an area for enemy strength and numbers, this is the answer to your problems. In this case, the spell will help the whole group.

Importance: High

Raise Dead

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: This spell is simple in use, but tremendous in power. When one of your characters dies, cast raise dead on him, and he will come back to life. Be careful, though, as the character will have no hit points when he reappears.

Importance: Vital

Repulse Dead

Type: Other

Strategy: Working like the clerical ability ward undead, repulse undead will force all undead away from the caster for one turn. No saving throw is allowed. However, where ward undead repeats infinitely and has a chance at destroying the undead outright, repulse undead is a one-time deal. The bonus of not allowing a saving throw is not worth using the spell over the limitless ability. Only use this spell if you are overwhelmed by the undead and need a moment's respite.

Importance: Low

Righteous Magic

Type: Imbuement

Strategy: The ultimate in the line of spells that increase the combat abilities of priests, righteous magic gives the caster one extra point of strength for every three levels. Also, the spell grants one additional hit point per level. Righteous magic will downright turn your priest into a godlike weapon of destruction. Adding as much as 24 points of strength, it literally turns your priest into a behemoth of mythic proportions and should be used whenever your priest must get his hands dirty in combat.





Importance: Vital

Slay Living

Type: Touch damage, summoning

Strategy: This spell summons a weapon with which the priest has 18 seconds to hit the target. If he does, the weapon will deal 2d6+9 points of damage and will force the enemy to make a save versus spells or be killed. The damage is great, but the ability to use this spell will rarely get past the save, though.

Importance: Moderate

True Seeing

Type: Dispel

Strategy: Like the mage spell true sight, this spell has the effect of dispelling all illusions in the area and can be useful if your enemy is a mage and has cast mislead or another beguiling spell. Otherwise, there isn't much of a use for it.

Importance: Low

Level 6

Aerial Servant

Type: Summoning

Strategy: This spell is much like any other summoning spell, only this time, you get an aerial servant. Unfortunately, aerial servants are not particularly good, so neither is this spell.

Importance: Low

Animal Summoning III

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Like animal summoning I and II, this spell summons animals to fight by your side. However, in this case, the summoned minions have a good amount of hit points and do a bit of damage. Good for tough battles, these monsters will take the hits, but not much else. Mages, unfortunately, are the true masters of summoning.

Importance: Moderate

Blade Barrier

Type: Defense, touch damage

Strategy: Creating a damaging shield of blades, this spell is great if your priest is in the center of combat. When the Priest is in the middle of the fray, cast





this spell, and it will deal 8d8 points of damage to all creatures near the priest. Though enemies do get a save, and it does often succeed, this spell lasts for ten rounds, so there is ample time for success as well as failure.

Importance: Moderate

Bolt of Glory

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: Dealing incredible damage against the undead and demons as well as scoring good damage against everyone else, this spell is stunning. With no saving throw and the damage enhancements for said creatures, this is one of the few truly great priest damage spells. Don't go anywhere without this.

Importance: Vital

Conjure Animals

Type: Summoning

Strategy: Like the other animal summoning spells, conjure animals summons animals to fight by your side. However, in this case, the monsters have a good amount of hit points and do a great deal of damage. Great for any battle, conjure animals will summon very worthwhile creatures and is well worth the effort. It's easily the best of the priest summoning spells.

Importance: High

Conjure Fire Elemental

Type: Summoning - druid only

Strategy: Exactly like the wizard spell of the same name, this spell works just like any other summon creature spell with strategies much the same. The only difference is that elementals can actually turn on their master and attack you. So, to avoid that unfortunate occurrence, cast a protection from evil spell on yourself. The elemental has a good amount of hit points, so he can absorb quite a bit of damage. Also, he helps in a fight by dealing acceptable damage. The casting time, though, makes the spell impractical to use en masse.

Importance: Moderate

Dolorous Decay

Type: Missile damage - druid only

Strategy: Dolorous decay slows the target for two rounds and deals one point of damage each second if the save is not made. However, the save usually is made, so the spell is rather pointless. Even if it weren't, most creatures won't be alive for almost a minute regardless.

Importance: Low





False Dawn

Type: Area damage

Strategy: Much like holy smite, this deals damage to the undead. In this case, it deals 6d6 points of damage, and no saving throw is allowed. Also, all undead are confused. So, this is better in every way. All in all, false dawn is the definitive anti-undead damage spell.

Importance: High

Fire Seeds

Type: Missile damage - druid only

Strategy: Creating four seeds that explode into a fireball upon impact, this spell is difficult to use and pointless. Though they explode for two to 16 points of damage, they explode into an area and can damage your party members. Since the seeds only last for three turns, it is impossible to position your priest strategically. In other words, this spell does more harm than good.

Importance: None

Harm

Type: Touch Damage

Strategy: Much like cause critical wounds, this spell is a touch damage spell that will do insane amounts of damage. With no save allowed, this spell will take the creature down to one hit point. Period. Like its earlier incarnation, touch damage spells are abysmal for mages, though they serve to boost the priest's already competent fighting abilities. For these spells, you must wait until you are attacking an enemy worth casting the spell on. Then, once you are out of harm's way, and the target is concentrating on attacking another party member, cast this spell. Once cast, you have two rounds to successfully hit the enemy. Once you do, this spell will simply take the enemy down to one hit point (with no saving throw). If you don't hit it, though, the spell will be wasted. So, make sure your priest has a good backup weapon, and you are in a position to hit. All in all, if used correctly, harm is the ultimate touch spell in the game. It's simply and utterly fantastic.

Importance: Vital

Heal

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: Cast this spell on a hurt party member. This spell heals all damage. Heal is the ultimate healing spell and will fully heal whomever it is cast upon. This spell is extraordinarily useful both in and out of combat and will save you





many, many, times. You will always have a use for it, so fill up any remaining slots with heal.

Importance: Vital

Physical Mirror

Type: Defense

Strategy: Reflecting all missile weapon attacks back to the sender, this spell would be decent if it weren't such a high level. Unfortunately, it is, so there is almost no point in using it. There are too many other ultra-useful level 6 spells.

Importance: Low

Sol's Searing Orb

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: Acting as a thrown fireball, Sol's searing orb does 12d6 points of damage and 6d6 points of damage if it's resisted (there is also a bonus for damage against the undead). The damage is extraordinary, but, like the wizard spell fireball, it affects a huge area, with all creatures in the area - friend and foe - taking damage. It is a great spell to start a battle with, however. Before you move your party in, send a searing orb flying forward to do some early damage without your party being hit. The damage dealt is incredible, and many creatures will fall from simply one strike.

Importance: High

Wondrous Recall

Type: Other

Strategy: This spell simply lets you take two spells level 6 or lower and cast them again. With this spell, you get two for the price of one. Always, always use it. There is no disadvantage, and the end result is one more spell.

Marvelous!

Importance: Vital

Level 7

Confusion

Type: Hindrance

Strategy: This spell has a good and a bad side. It causes the creature to attack friend and foe, wander, or just stand around confused if it fails a save. The good side is that if the saves are failed, you can get rid of a large pack of monsters, but again, they get the save. Another bad thing is that if they do fail the save, there is no guarantee that they will leave or attack a friend. They





may just keep on beating on you, making the spell worthless. We didn't care for this spell and feel that there are lots better ones at this level.

Importance: Low

Conjure Earth Elemental

Type: Summoning

Strategy: This is a speak-for-itself spell. Cast this, and you will have a new friend that will take a beating and hold back the pack. Always have this one ready to go. It will summon a very tough earth elemental that will fight to the death for you.

Importance: High

Creeping Doom

Type: Summoning - druid only

Strategy: This spell has a lot of potential, and the successful save will still do half the duration - instead of six rounds, it will work for three. This spell summons forth a creeping carpet of insects that will do two points of damage per round for the duration and will completely stop any spellcasting. It's a nice spell to keep those wizards at bay. If you have an extra slot to use and need some help against a tough wizard, this spell is nice.

Importance: Moderate

Earthquake

Type: Area damage

Strategy: This spell rock. Cast this, and all the baddies in the area must make a save at a -6 penalty or take a lot of damage (6d6), drop their weapons, and be knocked to the ground for four rounds. They can make their save and still take 3d6 points of damage. This spell will go on to do it again in the next round, but for 3d6 points of damage or half if saved and again a third time for 2d6 points of damage or half if saved. All three tremors will have a chance of knocking the monster down and disarming it. The downside? There is a small chance you will upset an earth elemental that will attack the party. It's no biggie and worth the risk. Have one of these spells ready at all times.

Importance: High

Finger of Death

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: This spell has a good chance of ending a creature's life in one word. The monster must make a save at -2 or die: no deposit, no return. The thing





is, even if it saves, it takes $2d8+1$ points of damage, so you will still do something no matter what. We like this spell and do recommend it.

Importance: Moderate

Fire Storm

Type: Area Damage

Strategy: This is a decent spell, but not something to write home about. The damage is weak, but will last four rounds, if you can keep the monster in the spell's area of effect, and trust me, it wants to leave. The spell will do $2d8+1$ points of damage per level, and the one nice thing is, no save is allowed. If you must do damage to a lot of monsters at one time, this spell will do the trick for you, but the wizard class can do better. Maybe it's better to leave it to the masters.

Importance: Low

Gate

Type: Summoning

Strategy: This spell is the same as the wizard's gate spell. This will summon a pit fiend that is not happy to be here. He comes out killing anything that moves, including your party, so you better have your protection from evil spell going. It's not a bad spell at all because there is no pet tougher than this one.

Importance: Moderate

Holy Word

Type: Area damage, hindrance

Strategy: Nice, nice, nice. This spell will do something to someone with no save. At the level you start casting this spell, you will most likely be doing the least amount of damage you can to a monster, which is still a pain for enemy wizards. Cast this, and any monster that is in the area with 12 hit dice or more will be deafened for one turn and have a 50 percent chance of spell failure.

Ouch! We always have this spell ready for those groups of nasty wizards and priests.

Importance: Moderate

Nature's Beauty

Type: Missile damage - druid only

Strategy: We don't like this spell because of the save. The monster that views you after this spell is cast must to make a save at a +3 (a very good chance of saving) or die.

Importance: Low





Greater Restoration

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: Lose a level? Lose some intelligence? Gone berserk or have some other ailment? This spell is the fix for these problems, but at the cost of fatiguing the priest. It's a nice spell, and one you will use often. But, you shouldn't memorized it until you need it.

Importance: Low

Resurrection

Type: Cure, heal

Strategy: This spell will bring a fallen friend back from the dead and is a great spell, but not one that you must have memorized at all times. If you need it, rest and get it then, unless you are in an area in which you cannot rest. If that is the case, this spell is probably worth having in your memory before you enter.

Importance: Moderate

Shield of the Archons

Type: Defense

Strategy: This is the priest's version of spell protection. It will summon a shield that will protect the priest against one spell level per level of the priest. The catch is, the spell must be cast directly at the priest and is not an area of effect spell like stinking cloud. It's a nice spell for those fights against wizards, but why not just cast holy word on them and stop the casting altogether?

Importance: Low

Sunray

Type: Missile damage

Strategy: This is one heck of an anti-undead spell. This will do 1d6 points of damage per caster level versus the undead, but will only do three to 18 points of damage versus living monsters with a chance at a save or being blinded. If you are going up against some undead, this spell rocks and will most likely knock one undead down for the count because if the undead fails a save, it is destroyed. We look at it this way: Why not just summon a pit fiend to do the work and save you some time?

Importance: Low

Symbol: Stun

Type: Area damage





Strategy: We are not fans of the symbol line of spells because of the chance of a save and getting nothing for your troubles. We prefer to stick with surefire damage or summoning. But, if you want to set up traps, these are some fun little spells to cast. With this one, you will stun a monster for one round per level of your priest unless your enemies make a save versus spells at a -4 penalty.

Importance: Low

Symbol: Death

Type: Area damage

Strategy: We do not like this spell. It will only affect monsters with 60 hit points or less, and they get a save. Stay away from it and stick to the stun symbol if you want to set up symbol traps.

Importance: None

Symbol: Fear

Type: Area damage

Strategy: One good thing about this spell is that the target gets no save. The bad thing is that the monsters run off and half the time bring friends back with them. Again, you are better off using the stun symbol to set up traps.

Importance: Low

Unholy Word

Type: Area damage, hindrance

Strategy: This spell is the same as holy word, but works on good creatures and people instead of evil.

Importance: Low





Chapter Five: Enemies

As you travel the various lands of Baldur's Gate II in your quests, you'll encounter countless people, animals, and monsters bent on ensuring that you fail (usually in quite a violent manner). If you find yourself having trouble winning a fight, check back here for something that's quite rare in Faerûn: some friendly advice.

Ankheg

Creatures: Ankheg

Strategy: Making a cameo appearance from the original Baldur's Gate, these big brutes are now laughably easy. If you come across one, though, remember that their shell can be taken to Cromwell to get ankheg plate mail made.

Bear

Creatures: Black bear, brown bear, cave bear, polar bear

Strategy: Making another guest appearance, bears should not pose any problem. Much like ankhegs, their time in the light has passed. Otherwise, you will have no trouble killing them.

Beholder

Creatures: Spectator, observer, gauth, undead, beholder, elder orb

Strategy: Often appearing when you'd least like to see them, these eye tyrants pack an enormous punch. Shooting spells like the cause wounds line and various confusion and domination spells, beholders will often kill you before you ever get close to them. There are two good methods for taking these guys out. One is to grab the cloak of mirroring. This is a cloak that reflects all damage back to its source. With this, you can walk up a character, with preferably high magic resistance, to take the hits and reflect the damage. One character using this cheese tactic can solo kill five to seven beholders. There





is one problem to this method: imprisonment. This spell banishes your character to an alternate dimension. It can only be returned to the material plane with the level 9 mage spell freedom. Another method is to use hold monster. This freezes a beholder so it can't cast any spells or attack. Simply have your fighters attack, and the beholder will certainly die. If you are having trouble getting your hold monster spell off, try the level 5 mage spell lower resistance. Otherwise, the most important protection against beholders is anything that raises your magical resistance and any protection that will absorb spells. Also, defend yourself with everything you've got, for it will be a tough fight. If there is a group of beholders, once you see it, hit it fast and hit it hard. If you can knock a couple off, the group is no longer a problem.

Carrion Crawlers

Creatures: Carrion crawler

Strategy: Much like a grub worm on steroids, carrion crawlers are big and dumb. When you are attacked by them, you may be stunned momentarily and paralyzed. However, they are relatively easy to beat and shouldn't be difficult to kill if you charge in with guns blazing. You'll wipe the floor with them.

Demon Knight

Creatures: Demon knight

Strategy: Need a good fight? Here it is. These nasty knights are a cross between a mage and a knight, with the hit points of the latter and the spell resistance of the former. Casting spells like charm person and hold person along hacking you for 15 to 20 points a pop, these bad boys can wear a party down in a big hurry. The key to these creatures is to create a bottleneck and let your pets do the work. If your fighters get in close, they will be chopped up pretty quickly, so weaken them from afar first.

Doppelganger

Creatures: Doppelganger

Strategy: Posing as a nonthreat, doppelgangers are the kings of mimicking. They will pose as a person, usually one that needs help, then attack when you are least expecting it. Just hack their easy bodies to pieces and don't worry





about them. The worst of their attacks is the deception before the attack. Be aware that they are immune to sleep and charm spells.

Dragon

Creatures: Red dragon, black dragon, shadow dragon, silver dragon

Strategy: Though there has been some debate, we find dragons the most difficult creatures in the game, as they should be. Ranging in form and ability, each dragon battle will be the toughest you face. Our advice is to not fight them at all unless you are extremely high level. Even then, you must have a firm command of all aspects of the game to even touch them. In general, try to collect anti-dragon equipment like armor, swords, and the like. Dragons have terribly high magic resistance, so you must cast spells that lower their abilities to block your spells. Once that is done, try to stick to damage spells that are difficult or impossible to resist. Some great choices are magic missile and Abi Dalzim's horrid wilting. Another quick and dirty tactic is to use the level 7 mage spell finger of death (if your mage has it), which has a chance of almost killing the target. Nothing is sweeter than seeing a powerful dragon fall in the first ten seconds. Otherwise, defend yourself with any and all magical defenses you have. A great weapon to combat dragons with is a bow with arrows of biting. Although they only do a minimal 1d4 + 2 points of damage, they are poisoned and can take one third of the target's life in poison damage over 30 seconds. When used against a large creature, namely dragons, they can do 1d4 + 2 points of damage plus the 50 points of poison damage (a third of the approximate 150 hit points dragons have). Also, try to increase magic resistance and any spell immunities. Dragons will cast wicked spells that include a swipe of all characters that sends them flying in all directions. Lastly, try to remember that the different colored dragons will be resistant to the element of their color. For example, red dragons resist fire. Most importantly, pray to the Baldur's Gate gods for luck. Make no mistake, you'll need it.

Drow

Creatures: Drow warrior, drow priestess, drow mage, and drow archer

Strategy: Obviously, when you journey to the Underdark, you will fight a good many drow. The most important thing to remember is that they use their own prized adamantite armor. It is the best armor you'll ever see and makes them wickedly hard to hit. Your best bet is to use greater malison and take down their magic resistance. Then, hit them with spells, while your fighters do what





they can on the front lines. Remember to pick up their armor once you've killed your first few. It will set you equal to them for your stay in the Underdark.

Elementals

Creatures: Fire, earth, and air (lesser, normal, and greater)

Strategy: Usually summoned by mages, including your own party, elementals usually have lots of hit points, but are not very tough. Though each elemental is resistant to its corresponding element, it is otherwise very susceptible to magic and is very easy to cast spells on. So, hit elementals with all you have before they get a chance to deal damage to you. If you find them in groups, try to use an opening area damage spell of an element opposite to the group.

Ettercap

Creatures: Ettercap

Strategy: Serving mainly as an annoyance, the only real problem with ettercaps is their poison touch. Otherwise, hit them with all you have, and they will fall. If you have problems, use ward undead.

Ettin

Creatures: Ettin

Strategy: Big brutes, ettins pose no challenge. They are weak and have no magic resistance. You shouldn't need much help dealing with these tubs o' lard.

Evil Demons

Creatures: Nabassu, pit fiend

Strategy: Usually summoned by a high-level wizard, demons are relatively rare in Baldur's Gate II. Though immune to most elemental attacks, they should pose no problem if you cast protection from evil with a ten-foot radius on yourself. That will give you plenty of room to maneuver and take you out of harm's way. From there, feel free to do whatever you need to take them out. You will be perfectly safe.





Genie

Creatures: Djinni, efreeti

Strategy: Genies are avid spellcasters and will cast defensive spells on themselves like greater invisibility and fireshield. A cast of breach will take care of most of their spells. Thankfully, they usually have low hit points and, with a few offensive spells, will soon be lying in ashes.

Ghoul

Creatures: Ghoul, ghost, fell ghast, greater ghoul, ghoul lord

Strategy: Ghouls are very abundant, and appear in very deadly numbers, and pack a nasty punch. Though they have a paralysis attack, elves are immune to it. So, try to send elves in to do the dirty work, while the rest of your party hits them with ranged weapons. Unfortunately, they are magic resistant, so many spells will not get off. If you are having trouble, pull your cleric back and have him use turn undead. Not all will be turned immediately, but the spell will send a good number away each round and let you deal with a few at a time.

Gibberling

Creatures: Gibberling, mutated gibberling

Strategy: Small balls of fur, gibberlings can't do much to harm most adventurers. Serving as a minor annoyance and nothing more, they were born to be killed. They don't do much but wait for the unsuspecting adventurer.

Gnoll

Creatures: Elite, slasher, captain, warrior, veteran, flind

Strategy: Bringing back memories of Baldur's Gate, gnolls serve as a reminder of what came before. But, you won't have to think too long; they'll be dead before you noticed them.

Goblin

Creatures: Archer, elite archer, elite warrior, and captain





Strategy: Goblins are deceptively powerful. Using ranged attacks and sometimes hitting from hard-to-reach places, goblins can pack quite a punch. If you see a group, don't feel bad casting an area damage spell to take care of them. In fact, hitting them with long-range weapons and spells is highly recommended. Since they give so little experience, don't feel like they aren't putting up a good fight. They are, so don't let them live, or you will take damage needlessly.

Golem

Creatures: Flesh, stone, clay, iron, brain, sand, juggernaut, and adamantium

Strategy: In general, golems make some tough enemies. Most importantly, you'll need better than +1 weapons to hit a golem in the first place. Also, they are magic immune, so don't bother trying to cast on them. The only way to beat them is to haste your party, imbue yourself with spells, and concentrate on the golems with special abilities like stone and iron. Once you have taken out those that harm your party through magical means, hit them as hard as you can and as quickly as you can, and they will fall. Keep a priest nearby to heal your group and try using their size to your advantage. You can, cheaply, get them stuck in doorways and other bottlenecks, making your job easier.

Hobgoblin

Creatures: Archer, warrior, mage killer, wizard, captain, elite, and shaman

Strategy: Though hobgoblins give almost no experience and are beyond simple to kill, their priests do cast spells that are as annoying as any other. With a repertoire of confusion spells, you should take out their casters. Since those pose the only threat, you can then easily destroy the rest.

Illithid

Creatures: Mind flayer, alhoon, ulitharid, vampiric

Strategy: Illithids are simply the most powerful pack of enemies in existence. You will run into illithids in groups, and they will kill you. With one cast of a spell, they will charm party members or confuse half your group. While one is doing that, the others will be attacking you and dealing hefty damage. Quickly, any strategy you have will turn into utter chaos, and all will be lost. The easiest way to defeat illithids is to send in hordes of summoned creatures





beforehand to absorb the spells. Once they have cast their spells, defend yourself with spell-absorbing defensive spells and pray that it is enough. If you find yourself losing party members, especially your mage, don't bother continuing. Reload and try again. These will make some tough battles. Equipment-wise, there are some definite ways to combat illithids. First and foremost, fight them in their city in the Underdark. There, you will come across mind control circlets. They act like a permanent charm and let you easily control illithids whenever you see them. If you come across them at other times, wear helmets of charm protection and bombard them with melee attacks.

Imp

Creatures: Imp, quasit

Strategy: Imps are something of an ultra-mephit, with similar hit points but a more powerful poisonous attack. They can perform instant kills if your characters fail a saving throw versus poison, so you might want to use a potion of invulnerability ahead of time if you can't afford to die. You can also select the character with the lowest saving throw of your group to take them on, as they aren't very strong, with fewer than 30 hit points. They generally like to make themselves invisible, so be prepared for that as well.

Kobold

Creatures: Archer, warrior, captain, commando, witch doctor, shaman, slave, and kamikaze

Strategy: Much like hobgoblins, their casters can pose a slight annoyance. Also, their archers can deal a bit of damage, so for sheer ease, clear them all away simply with one fireball.

Kuo-Toa

Creatures: Kuo-toa, whip, warrior, monitor, lieutenant, priest, wizard, captain

Strategy: You will only find kuo-toa in gigantic crowds, and they are actually somewhat difficult to beat. Their archers can pack a punch, and their shamans cast wicked confusion and charm spells. Any area damage works wonders against a pack of these, and it is definitely advised you kill the casters first.





Lich

Creatures: Lich, demilich

Strategy: Liches are certainly among the elite monsters in Baldur's Gate II. These once-living spellcasters are now undead creatures with centuries of spell research to draw from, making them the most proficient mages in the game, with access to virtually every spell in the book. They'll use them, too, especially the higher-level spells like time stop and power word: kill. Once you face off against a lich, expect it to raise spell traps and mantle spells immediately, followed by time stop, horrid wilting, meteor storm, and other nasty spells. They're not unbeatable, though, especially if you can attack hard and early. One strategy that sometimes works is to send forth a sacrificial lamb. A character with high health, magic resistance, or saving throws might have a chance to suffer the lich's initial attacks and survive. Even if the character dies, the rest of your party can charge the lich and attempt to destroy it without worrying about time stops. You can find liches in the Underdark, the Drow City, and even in an inn near the city gates of Athkatla. There's only one demilich in the game, though, and most players will probably never beat him. Kangaxx is his name, and he dwells underneath the Cult of the Unseeing Eye in Athkatla. Though he only has 50 health, he can cast so many spells in such a short time that your characters will start dying before they have a chance to attack. His repertoire is similar to a lich, with power word: kill and wail of the banshee being his killer spells in the early going.

Lizardmen

Creatures: Red lizardmen, lizard king

Strategy: Lizardmen pose no threat. Zero. Simply dice 'em to bits.

Mephit

Creatures: Lightning, fire, earth, steam, and so on

Strategy: Contrary to popular belief, mephits are actually quite difficult at the beginning of the game. With all casting various spells, they deal a great amount of damage. In numbers, they can be lethal. Since they have very few hit points, our advice is to kill them as quickly as possible and use area damage spells to knock out many at once.





Minotaur

Creatures: Minotaur

Strategy: Minotaurs are infrequent and mostly harmless. Though they have plenty of hit points, they'll rarely do any damage, and if you move in any character with a low armor class, they will do nothing. Simply hack and slash them away and keep your ranged weapons firing. If needed, cast spells, as minotaurs have very low magic resistance.

Mist

Creatures: Vampiric, mist horror, wandering horror, and crimson death

Strategy: Mists seem to be difficult to hit in general, but like many other undead, they do require +1 weapons to touch. Hammer them with any and all fighters you have, then hit them with simple damage spells like magic missile to finish them off.

Moose (or other docile creatures)

Creatures: Moose, rabbit, squirrel

Strategy: When walking through the forest in some pleasant town, a large moose crosses your path. What do you do? Do you kill it? Do you banish it? Or do you pass it by? No! This is a challenge... Can you resist the urge to kill it? Well if you like role-playing and don't want to kill innocent animals use the incredible, inedible polymorph on them! Yes, that's right... Turn that 1,500 pound, high-quality moose into a huggable, lovable squirrel. This is permanent and cannot be undone, so you must deal with the loss of food for the time being.

Mummy

Creatures: Lesser mummy, greater mummy

Strategy: Mummies prove annoying enemies. Since they have a knack for infecting you with disease and casting high-level spells, it's best to hit them using ranged weapons and magic. Once you are casting, they should fall fast, which is good, as their damage mounts up fast.





Myconid

Creatures: Warrior, king, and spore colony

Strategy: Myconids can ruin your day fast. With their deadly charm spell, it is best never to let them get in range. The single sure way to conquer them is never to let them touch you. Start with a web, then continually cast your favorite area damage spell. Those that break through the web should be picked off with archers. Also, use any other damaging spell to take out any approaching myconids that break through your spell line. If they manage to get their spores near you, have a priest cast a zone of sweet air. Since you will find multiple colonies near each other, web, cast, kill, rinse, and repeat.

Ogre

Creatures: Ogrillon, ogre, ogre mage, half ogre

Strategy: Falling into the "dumb brute" category with their hairy brothers the ettin, ogres are easy to kill and more fun to watch die. It's so humorous to hear them try to cry out: "Me will smash your face" and die before you even hear the whole phrase. So, for everyone's sake, smash their faces and be done with it.

Orc

Creatures: Archer, warrior, orog archer, orog warrior, wizard, priest

Strategy: Orcs are simply dumb and stupid. They pose no threat and never did (since the beginning of Baldur's Gate, at least). Just for fun, cast any low-level area damage spell and watch them all fall over at once. There is no joy in the world like mass slaughter...

Otyugh

Creatures: Otyugh

Strategy: Otyughs only defense is a mild disease attack. Otherwise, the only thing they seem good at is flapping their big tentacles around like a dog wags his tail. They look nasty, but are all soft and mushy on the inside.





Rakshasa

Creatures: Rakshasa, ruhk, rajah, maharajah

Strategy: Up there with beholders, rakshasa are some of the toughest pack-based enemies in the game. They cast wave after wave of spells, including area damage spells. In fact, they cast almost any high-level damage spell you can think of. Your best bet is to summon horde after horde of creatures and send them in. Once they are in and attacking, cast area damage spells repeatedly on the group or individual rakshasas (with your summons intertwined), then hit them with magic missiles and long-range weaponry. A web to keep them in place never hurt either.

Sahuagin

Creatures: Sahuagin, baronial guard, chieftain, baron, prince, royal guard, king, high priestess

Strategy: These cool blue enemies are fishlike creatures with low hit points and low magic resistance, but are dangerous if left unattended. They have warriors and priests, but very few wizards. Their warriors will use crossbows, and the priests have some nice spells, so the best thing to do is send buffed-up warriors into the fray and concentrate powers on the magic casters first. Once they are dead, it becomes a quick sweep up.

Salamanders

Creatures: Red and blue salamanders

Strategy: Relatively simple melee fighters, salamanders are notable mostly for their elemental alignments, with red salamanders being associated with fire attacks, and blue salamanders associated with cold creatures. You can use the opposite element to deal with each variety, but they're fairly easy to dispatch with simple fighting techniques.

Shadow

Creatures: Shadow, shade wolf, wraith, shimmering wraith, and spectre

Strategy: Dealing good damage and draining your strength, shadows can drain your party very fast. Though they are immune to cold damage, you can





hit them with most other spells, and they will fall. In a worst-case scenario, you can fend them off with ward undead while you pick them off one by one.

Skeleton

Creatures: Skeleton, warrior, grimward archer, grimward warrior, and bone golem

Strategy: Rarely posing any threat, simply send in your fighters and deal out the damage. They are affected by most spells and can easily be kept at bay with ward undead. In general, they give a good deal of experience for very little effort. If you find an area populated with them, you can gain a lot of easy experience by simply plowing through them

Slime

Creatures: Green slime, jelly ochre, grey ooze, and jelly mustard

Strategy: Usually not posing any threat, slime's only notable attribute is that the harder slimes will require +1 weapons. But, you'll probably have them beforehand anyway, so it really doesn't matter. They can also poison you, but you'll most likely kill them before it ever poses a threat.

Spider

Creatures: Baby, huge, giant, wraith, phase, and sword

Strategy: These creatures can be found all over the world, but especially underground. Individually, spiders won't pose a huge threat, but when 20 small spiders attack you, you've got a problem. It is often worth it to cast the level 3 mage spell fireball at your own party. This will do 6d6 of damage to all creatures. Yes, your own party members will take some damage, but it will kill all the small spiders, and it is often preferable to have a slightly damaged mage over a near-dead and poisoned one. When fighting normal spiders, just use warriors and prepare to cure the poison. When fighting phase spiders, it is best to use archers.

Troll

Creatures: Ice, snow, giant, spectral, spirit, and so on





Strategy: Trolls are really not difficult if you know what to do. Though they can pack a punch, hit them from afar until they fall over unconscious. Immediately cast a Melf's minute meteor spell (which creates 20 throwable meteors) and attack them once. The meteors will hit, and they will fall over dead. Next time you encounter a troll, make sure your mage does not attack. Then, when the troll is down, attack once more with the mage. Repeat as needed. If you are fortunate enough to have ample fire arrows, those work as well.

Umber Hulk

Creature: Umber hulk

Strategy: Easily one of the most difficult early game enemies, umber hulks will charm and confuse enemies up the wazoo. The easiest way to dispatch them is to open a door, then step back. If you've done it quickly enough, the hulks will not see you. Once the door is open, cast web and ensnaring Roots or any two other hindering spells, then cast as many area damage spells as you have. If any break through, and only one or two will at a time, hit them with magic missiles and send in your fighters. In case they do get spells off, keep your mage (or whomever you use for dispel) a good way off. If you are hit with a spell, grab your mage and simply dispel the effect. Repeat until all the umber hulks have been destroyed.

Vampire

Creatures: Male, female, fledgling, mature, patriarch, and so on

Strategy: Casting many aggravating spells, vampires can pose a problem. Most importantly, vampires will cast level drain, which is especially annoying when cast on mages and priests, as it will force you to memorize all their spells once you cure them. However, to prevent this, either wait until you're affected and cast the priest spell lesser restoration or cast negative planar protection beforehand. If your cleric would lose the lesser restoration spell from being hit, it is important that you cast negative planar protect on the priest, so you can heal the rest of your party. Otherwise, once you kill any vampire, look for its coffin. You will need a stake to put it to final death, but it will be worth it, as you will receive an extra 9,000 experience points from the already generous amount given when it died originally.





Wolves

Creatures: (Greater) werewolf, (greater) wolfwere; and dire, dread, worg, and winter wolf

Strategy: Customarily dealing small damage, the only wolves of consequence are the werewolves. As long as you have +1 weapons or better (are we sensing a pattern here?), though, you will rip through them like fresh meat.

Wyvern

Creatures: Baby wyvern, wyvern

Strategy: If you somehow don't kill them quickly, they have a poison attack that can get very annoying. However, they are extremely easy to kill and should be easy for anyone to dispatch once you find them.

Yuan-Ti

Creatures: Yuan-ti, commander, priest, mage

Strategy: These guys look very similar to salamanders, but are much tougher. The salamanders, who are very physically weak, posed no problems and were easy. The yuan-ti are also very physically weak, but have very strong and incapacitating magic. They are rarely alone, and if you don't concentrate on them, they will bring the effectiveness of your fighter to that of a mage in melee combat. They have low magic resistance, so hit them with spells, arrows, and, of course, good ol' hand-to-hand slicing and dicing.

Zombies

Creatures: Zombie, ju-ju zombie, sea zombie

Strategy: Looking much more formidable than they really are, zombies don't do much of anything but lope around. They can disease you, though. But to prevent this, simply attack from a distance. Once they get close, move father away and resume attacking.





Chapter Six: Walk-through

Baldur's Gate II is a long game, and you're bound to get stuck somewhere along the way. Enter our walk-through. This is not an exhaustive guide to everything you can possibly do within the game - that size walk-through would be thousands of pages. Rather, it is a guide that will take you through the travels, quests, and battles necessary to complete the game. It's especially important to realize that your choice of NPCs will affect how the game plays. If you choose not to let an evil character join your party, for example, you may be missing a mini-quest that only an NPC can attempt. This walk-through is intended to be generic in the sense that it will rarely matter what specific NPCs are in your party, but some specific NPC quests will be covered. These will be noted as such, so feel free to skip those sections if you wish. This walk-through, in general, will be most useful to parties of prominently good or neutral alignments; evil characters will want to make proper role-playing choices where they are available (not rescuing slaves, being cruel in conversation, and so on). This shouldn't have too great of an impact on the game, though you may find yourself performing some tasks a bit differently than is outlined here.

Reading this section straight through is not recommended, as it will give away many of the game's surprises, and what fun is that? Refer to the walk-through as needed, using it for advice on how to get past that evil sorcerer you just can't beat or for a clue on what to do to open that secret door. Following this part of the guide word-for-word will not only drain most of the fun out of the game, it'll take all the role-playing out as well. You'll go through the journey, missing most of the sub-quests and playing the way we would play. Only use this if you get stuck or need some advice!

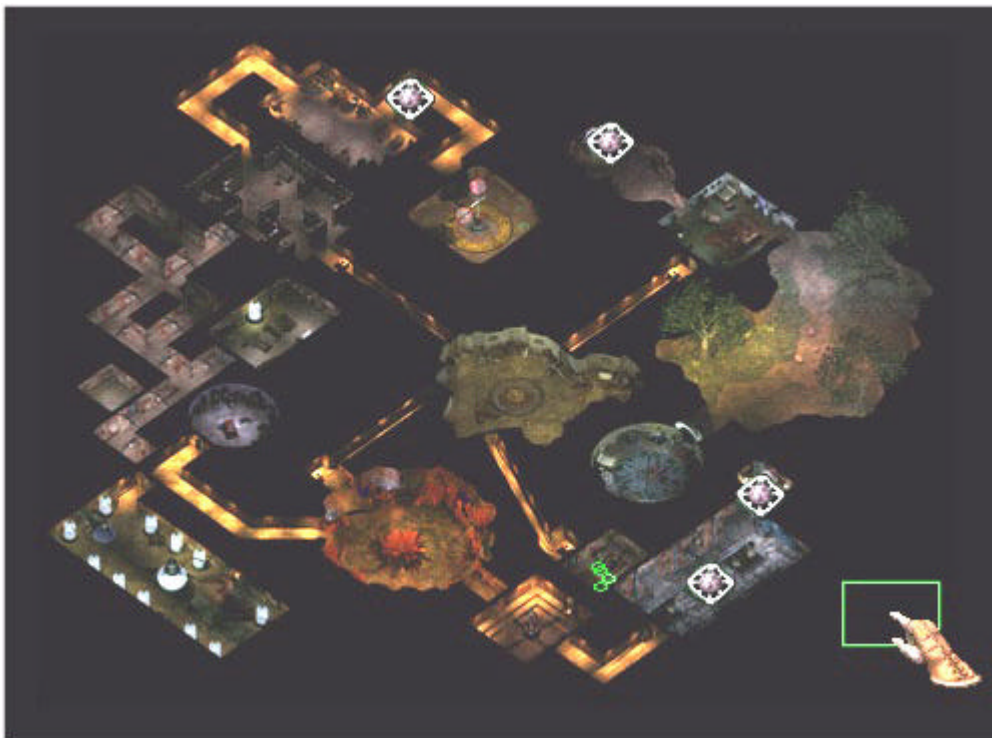
Chapter 1

You begin the game in a holding cell, where an unknown wizard is keeping you hostage. Sit through the opening in-game cinematic for a minute until Imoen comes to rescue you. Once she talks to you, join her group and head to the northeast. Imoen is a mage/thief, and she'll be doing most of the trap detecting duties for your party. She can use a dagger, but since she doesn't





wear armor, you might want to equip her with one of the short bows you'll find in your journey. To the northeast, you'll see two holding cells. Speak to Minsc first and insult him until he becomes enraged enough to break out of his cell. Minsc is a ranger and a fierce warrior in battle. He has specialties in a number of weapons, the most prominent being two-handed swords and two-weapon style. You're probably better off giving him a two-handed sword at this point in the game; it will help you take out many of the enemies much more quickly. Head up to talk to Jaheira, who's stuck in a cage that needs a magical key to be opened. You'll find said key in a room to the northwest. Don't worry; the golem in here isn't dangerous. Search the table and the chest for equipment for your three characters and make sure you find the key in the chest. Have Imoen detect traps and click on the painting near the chest. (As a note, it's typically a good idea to have a thief set to detect traps whenever you're adventuring through hostile territory.) She'll detect the trap and can unlock the painting to reveal a dagger +1 and a few healing potions.



Here's the first level of Irenicus' dungeon.

Head back to Jaheira and set her free. Jaheira is a fighter/druid that can change shape into various animals. She's not an overwhelmingly powerful presence in melee combat, and she has a fairly low hit-point total in relation to





the other characters, so you might want to keep her out of harm's way if you are a warrior character. Once she's in your party, head back to the equipment room and find some equipment for her. Don't bother heading out the door in this room; there's only a locked door on the other side. Head to the south and into the corridor with the dead bodies. You'll come around a corner where you'll encounter a large machine that will spawn lightning mephits. There's a switch on the wall, so get close to it and hit it to prevent more mephits from popping out. You must fight at least one, but they're not very tough to kill.

Head out past the room and talk to Aatagah. He'll give you quite a few options to follow; if you want to take his test, be fairly compliant, and he'll eventually ask you if you wish to press a button or not. If you choose to do so, Aatagah will heal you, and an ogre mage will warp in. He can do a good amount of damage, but if your warriors swarm him, he should be taken out fairly quickly. You'll get around 20 gold from his body once he's dead, but Aatagah won't heal you again, so one or two of your characters will probably be hurting a bit.

Once you're through, take the passage heading to the west. There's a band of five goblins here: two armed with composite long bows and three with short-ranged weapons. Have your melee characters deal with the fighters first. You can cast spells on the archers or just wait until the fighters are dead to attack them. All the goblins will have a small amount of gold on their persons.

Once you're through here, follow the passage and take a right toward the door. Go through, and you'll face a radiant mephit. Swarm around it and take it out quickly, as it has a fairly damaging prismatic attack. When it's dead, talk to the golem in the room. Pretend to be its master and ask him to open the sewer doors. He'll tell you where the activation stone is; it's near Rielev. There is a song sword +1 on the table and a few assorted goodies in other receptacles in the room. Be sure to pick up the three extra healing potions in the chest and, as always, let Imoen do the honors of trap detecting and lockpicking.

Head back out to the corridor and head to the northwest. Round the corner, and you should find yourself in another corridor near a door. There may be another party of goblins about - be careful. You can head into the door to the northwest to kill two lesser clay golems by force attacking them; you won't get any gold or items, but they can't hurt you when they're activated later in the level. Head to the northeast and find the activation stone in Rielev's lair. You can perform a mercy killing on Rielev if you wish. The activation stone is on





the table in front of Rielev, so pick it up and head back to the sewage golem. Activate him for an easy 3,000 experience. You should check out the door opposite the golem's lair; there is an ice mephit and a steam mephit hanging around as well as a few chests. You can use the energy crystals you obtained from Rielev's tube on the tubes in this area for a bit more information, but you only have four crystals, so you can't activate all the tubes.

Once you've activated the golem, head back to the northwest, but take the turn near Rielev's area. You'll enter a sewer-like group of corridors, but you'll find the exit to the library soon enough. There are a few more goblins in here, so be ready. Once you've taken everyone out, search the bodies as well as the library walls for a number of items, mostly scrolls and healing potions.

Head to the northwest again and round the corner to come into a factory-like area. There are a number of evil dwarves here, both in melee and mage variations. They put up a tough fight, so try to be fairly healthy before walking in. Once you've killed them, you can use Imoen to search for hotspots; there are a few in the corners. If you haven't yet, you might find it useful to equip Imoen with the short bow you'll discover, and adjust her script accordingly. She's a bit more useful when taking the rear, as she's not much of a fighter, even with the dagger +1 you found earlier. Be sure to grab the acorns that one of the dwarves is carrying.

Head out the eastern passage and examine the door with Imoen. It's locked beyond your ability to open at this point, so don't worry about it yet. Avoid the trap on the ground and head to the room nearby to fight a camion. Twist the central structure twice to unlock the creature and be sure to position your stronger characters nearer the beast before freeing it. Once it's dead, pick up the treasure it dropped and head back to the library.

Follow the southern path from the library to reach the sewers. You'll be facing off against an otyugh. He's big, but will fall fairly easily when you attack him. Be sure to pick up the wand of frost key from his body (it can be hard to see). From there, head to the east and into the small living room. Have Imoen search for traps before moving about, as there are a few of them around. Disable the traps and start looking around for items. Head south from there and talk to the dryads. Tell them you have the acorns, and you'll complete the quest that they ask of you. Once you receive the experience bonus, head further to the southwest into the bedroom. Again, have Imoen search for traps.





There are seven in all, including a few on the floor, so be careful. Pick up all the items and don't miss the cabinet on the western wall.

Now, head all the way back to the locked door near the camion. Click on the door with the character that has the air elemental statue from the living room near the dryads. It will open, and you can go through the door to enter a new area.



This room and the nearby bedroom are full of traps.

Head to the north first, but take the first left to travel along the wooden walkway. You'll encounter a few mephits and a chest containing a conjure air elemental scroll at the end. Head back to the original walkway and go north. You'll come across a group of five mephits of various types here, so be careful. An area attack spell might come in handy in the beginning. Once they're all dead, head to the west. You'll come across a lantern. Click on it to



communicate with the genie that's trapped inside. He'll instruct you to find his true flask, which he needs to free himself. Unfortunately, you must travel all the way back to the dryads to get it. Don't forget that you can hold down the Shift key to assign waypoints for your characters, so that they will travel the entire path while you watch or get a drink or something like that. When you get the flask from the dryads, walk back to the genie and release him. You'll get 15,000 experience points and an extremely powerful sword. Head back to the real portal near the living room and go through.

You'll immediately meet up with Yoshimo, a true neutral NPC that is stuck in the dungeon with you. You can accept him into your party if you wish and want another hand in battle. He's a bounty hunter, so he can act as backup thief to Imoen. Bounty hunters are specialists in trap laying, a skill of dubious usefulness, but Yoshimo will be a welcome addition in battle. Since Imoen will be your primary source of thieving skills, you can let Yoshimo use any studded leather armor you find to decrease his chances of getting hit in battle.



The second level of the dungeon is a bit easier to navigate than the first.

From the entrance, the only passage leads east. You'll come into a room with numerous mephit generators. Destroy the generators before attacking the





mephits. The generators don't take much damage to destroy, so proceed quickly and destroy all four. Search the rest of the room for a couple wand keys and other items. Go through the western door first. Jaheira will have a conniption fit, so click through while remaining respectful of her husband. Once that extended conversation is done, kill the assassin and the escaped clone to get more experience. Once you've searched the room, head back to the room with the mephit generators and take the western passage. You'll run into a couple more mephits and some goblins, so chop through them until you reach another large room. The wooden plank is trapped, so let Imoen detect and disable it before moving on. The next room contains the various wands that will send off a variety of nasty magical effects if you walk by. You'll need all the keys; you should have picked them up from the Otyugh's corpse, the living room, and in the second portal room and chamber with the mephit generators. Give them all to one of your characters and let him manipulate each of the wands, which will make the passage safe. You can match up the wands with their effects by glancing at the ground in front of them, but it's not necessary to know this, as the character will use the correct key automatically.

When all the wands are deactivated, you'll have free rein over the rest of the level. The first hallway to the southwest leads to the exit, so skip it for now. To the northwest, there is a room containing a woman named Ulvaryl. She's facing off with three assassins that will die fairly quickly, then teleport to safety. You probably can't take her out, but you can try. There's not much to see in this room once she's gone.

Head into the passageway opposite the entrance to Ulvaryl's room to meet Frennedan. Stepping into the room, he'll call out to you and ask you to free him from his "glass bottle". Use Imoen to detect the traps in here, then open the chests to find the key you need. Free Frennedan from his cell and walk in. Imoen will detect another trap in here. Search the room for a few more scrolls and other items.

Frennedan is actually a monster in disguise. He'll follow you around for a bit if you let him, but eventually he'll reveal himself as a metallic monster of the same shape. You can force-attack him immediately after he is freed from his cell if you wish; it's not a big deal either way. He's not very powerful when he attacks you, and he only possesses melee attacks. Kill him and be on your way.





The northernmost passage in the wand hall leads to a foundry. There are a few evil dwarves about, with a pack of mages in the back room that might be trouble if you're not healthy. You don't have to fight them if you don't wish; simply don't come down this corridor. You'll find a girdle of bluntness in one of the chests in this area; it bestows a -4 bonus to armor class against blunt weapons on whomever wears it.

Once you're done exploring this area, head back to the southeastern passage that leads to the exit. You'll have a minor skirmish with some assassins on the way, but nothing that should slow you down much. Proceed through the sewers until you reach the exit (follow the trail of corpses).

Athkatla

Once you exit the dungeon, you'll find yourself near a battle between Irenicus and a few more assassins. Irenicus isn't very challenged, but mage authorities teleport into the battle and subdue him. Unfortunately, they take Imoen as well. All her equipment and items will be dispersed among the rest of the party. Once you're done talking, pick up the remnants of the assassins and start exploring the city. You'll probably be approached in short order by Ler, a friendly man who'll fill you in with background information if you want to talk to him. You should explore the area of the city that you're in for a bit and be sure to sell any extra items you don't need to one of the merchants nearby. Stopping for a rest at the Den of the Seven Vales would be wise if you are wounded.

Once you're done exploring, head down to the circus tent (use your map if you can't find it). Speak to the boy outside, then tell the guard you can take care of yourself. When you're inside, head toward the bridge until you encounter a genie. You must answer his riddle to pass. You can do the math if you want; it's on the order of a short-answer SAT question. If not, select the option where the prince is 30 years old, and the princess is 40. He'll disappear and let you pass. Head up toward the large structure and be sure not to explore the left or right areas by the door. There are shadows and werewolves here that will damage you, but yield no experience.

Upon entering the structure, you'll be greeted by an ogre (who is really Aerie, an NPC in disguise). Listen to her pleas and tell her that you'll break her chains. Talk to the spider to the west to update your journal; this is the mother of the boy you spoke to outside, but you can't free her yet. Go past the spider and attack the two peasants to the north. They'll morph into enemies; be sure





to pick up the ogre sword when they die. Give it to the ogre, and it will morph into Aerie. If you let her join your party, you might want to go through her spell books and customize her spells; she's a cleric/mage, so she'll be quite a helpful spellcaster for you. She's a bit of a free spirit and absolutely loves to randomly talk about her past, but she's a useful healer and will help identify items. Physically, she is the weakest character you've encountered so far, so try and equip her with a sling as soon as you can. She's not going to last long if she must go toe-to-toe with a monster. Rest if need be, though the rest of this quest isn't very difficult.

Heading into the next room, you'll be attacked right off by two werewolves and a shadow. You can handle yourself just fine. Check the two flowerpots by the stairs for some spells, then head up, ignoring any enemies that run over to attack you. There's nothing else in the large room except more enemies, and you don't get any experience for beating them.

Once you reach the uppermost room, you'll encounter Kalah. He's surrounded by a few monsters as well as Quayle, Aerie's uncle. Quayle's the slime on the floor, so be sure you don't attack him. Group all your characters together and pound on Kalah until he dies. It won't take long; he's fairly weak. As soon as he's dead, the illusion is dispelled, and you'll find yourself in the true circus tent.

Kalah will die a dramatic death and imply that he was given his powers by some external force. If you didn't rescue Aerie in the illusion, but saved Quayle, you can let her join your party now (though you would've gotten more experience the other way). Be sure to check Kalah's body for some excellent items, including a ring of human influence and around 700 gold. Talk to the woman to the west named Hannah; she's the mother of the boy outside the tent. Leave the tent and talk to the boy and the guard for some extra bonuses. Don't forget to level up if you can.

Before you leave this town, you might want to visit the adventurer's mart. There's plenty of bizarre and exotic items on sale there, though they might be a bit out of your price range at this point. Check out the paintings on the back wall as well - bonus points for naming the pop culture reference.

Once you're ready to leave this section of the town, head for one of the district exits and go to the slums. When you arrive, talk to Gaelen in his house. He'll tell you that he might know how to rescue Imoen. He'll eventually drop the





other shoe: It'll cost you 20,000 gold to rescue Imoen. Considering you have, at most, around 4,000 at this point, you obviously must do some work to raise the sum. Once you agree to the price, the first chapter of Baldur's Gate II will end.

Chapter 2

You'll begin this chapter in Gaelen's house. You can take the stairs to meet with a shadow guild thief. Have Yoshimo detect traps before you go clicking; there are three in this room. Once you're ready to move on, head outside and talk to Brus. Accept his offer, and you'll be whisked off to the Copper Coronet.

The Copper Coronet

The Copper Coronet is a large bar with a number of NPCs and patrons inside. You'll want to talk to Lord Jierdan, who will offer you quite a bit of money if you save his village from marauding trolls. Accept that quest, and your journal will be updated.

There are three different NPCs that can join your party in the Copper Coronet. Anomen Delryn is a fighter/cleric who must prove himself to an organization called the Radiant Heart. He's an acceptable warrior, though he can only use blunt weapons like maces. He can also use a small number of clerical spells. Nalia de'Arnise is a mage/thief and would-be do-gooder that is eager to protect her family keep from mysterious forces. She's actually one of the more damaging offensive spellcasters you'll have in your party at this point (assuming your main character isn't a mage), though, like all mage/thieves, she's not well suited to using armor and should stick to the rear during battles. She can use a short bow and be equipped with one as soon as you can find one. Korgan Bloodaxe is a chaotic evil dwarven berserker that wants to investigate a nearby graveyard. He's one of the most physically powerful characters you'll encounter, so he's a good choice if you need more offensive strength, but his alignment will cause problems if you're mostly using good characters. Nalia is a good character to pick up here, and you can take along Anomen as well if you want to drop another character from your party (Yoshimo, for instance; he'll stick around in the Copper Coronet for later use).

Once you reform your party, you might want to rememorize spells and rest in the inn (talk to the man walking around near Lehtinan at the northwestern end of the bar). Once you're prepared for more adventuring, you can do a little





side quest that's built into the Copper Coronet. Talk to Lehtinan and go through his conversation menus until you convince him that you want to go into the back rooms. Head back to the bouncer and go through the door that is now unblocked. Talk to the guards if you wish, but head through the door leading to the northeast. You should find yourself in a long passage leading to the slave chambers. There are a couple of secret rooms on the north passage that your thieves might spot. The one on the right leads to a sewer maze, so don't examine it yet. Keep heading to the northeast until you reach the prison.

Once there, you'll be attacked right off by a few guards. A few of them appear to be spellcasters, so be cautious. Once they're dispatched, talk to Hendak in the middle cell. He'll ask you to free him and the other slaves. You'll need the beastmaster's key for this.



Beware these guards underneath the Copper Coronet.





Leave the slave cells by the southern door and head to the south across the gladiator pits. You'll find the animal cells to the southeast. Once you are hostile to the beastmaster, he'll unleash the animals in the cages, so be careful. There are a few nasties in here, including a black bear and a minotaur. If you manage to kill the beastmaster quickly, you can try to dart up to his corpse, take the key and the rest of his loot, and escape the area before the minotaur notices you. Either way, get the key and head back to the slaves. Release the kids on either side of Hendak before you open his cell; they'll each nab you 2,500 experience points. Once Hendak is released, follow him back down the hallway, dispatching guards as you go. If you can follow him quickly enough, you can force-attack Lehtinan to make the fight easier for him (though Lehtinan is doomed either way). Once Lehtinan falls, the Copper Coronet is under new management, and you can speak to Hendak for a new quest involving slavers working in the city. Don't forget to search Lehtinan's body for a large amount of gold and some other goodies. If you wish, you can visit the brothel at this point or speak to Bernard to sell any items you don't want. Once you're ready to head out and kill some slaverunners, head back to the secret passage and go up the stairs to the sewers.

The Sewers

You'll be ambushed by hobgoblins right off. These guys are fairly tough, so swarm the shamans first. Once they're dead, search the bodies, then head back to the branching corridor. An otyugh will appear with a couple of slimes nearby. Kill them all, then look at the grate in the middle of the room. Reach down to pull out a hand from the sewer.

Head back past the hobgoblin corpses and into the cave area. There's a branch to the northeast heading to a room with three myconids. It's not necessary to kill them, and be aware that they can confuse your characters. Search the skeletons on the wall in the cave for a ring.

Follow the southern path and eventually reach more sewers. The door that lies across the pit is trapped, so be sure to detect and disable it. Look around to the south if you want. To the north is a group of kobolds. They'll threaten you when you appear, but won't go immediately hostile. You can take them out with a fireball or similar spell while they are waiting around or just hack and slash through them. One of the shamans may cast a large entangle spell on your party, so be wary. You can nab a shaman's staff from the dead shaman; it can cast goodberries once per day, but will also be needed for an upcoming puzzle.





Keep heading south. The path will veer to the west and east. The western path is trapped, and the eastern path has another party of hobgoblins to deal with. Meet Quallo in the south, and he'll tell you to find the "clues." Head to the northeast until you find the room with the pipes; a disembodied voice will ask you to free it from the water. You can click on each pipe to get a hint as to what item you must use on it. Head back to Quallo and kill his carrion crawler pal. Pick up the blood and ask him about each item. The riddles are fairly easy to solve, but if you need help, here's the order in which you should place the items: hand, ring, blood, staff. Going from left to right on the pipes, click on them in this order: third, first, second, fourth. Each party members will gain 18,000 experience points, and you will find a nice new intelligent two-handed sword. Head to the south and up the stairs to the slaver's ship. You might want to rest up first, as you'll be facing a bit of a battle.

The Slaver Ship

Once you arrive, Captain Haegan and his men will begin assaulting you. Haegan is a tough one, and there is a priest that will cast defensive spells on the rest of the men as well. Eliminate them and search the bodies for items and especially don't miss Haegan's body.

You can explore the rest of the ship now. There are a couple of trolls through the eastern door here; these might be good practice for the quest that Lord Jierdan wants you to undertake. They are not extremely difficult to take out, though they can be tricky. You should position your warriors near the door and lure the trolls out, one at a time if possible. Hack and slash away until they fall down, then have a character cast a fire or acid spell on their bodies (Melf's acid arrow works well). If you don't burn their bodies, they will regenerate and fight again. They both offer 1,400 experience points. Give the girl nearby 100 gold for an easy reputation point. Now, head through the northern passage in the middle of the ship and free the two children for more experience. Head into the doorway to the northern room and detect the traps. There are a couple of yuan-ti in the nearby room; kill them and detect the traps here, too. Search the rooms and get the items. Heal up and get ready for another tough battle.

To the southwest, there's a room with a couple of wizards as well as a guard and an archer. A silence 15-foot radius spell is a good idea while the wizards are grouped together or perhaps a Fireball. Move your tougher characters through the doorway and start taking out the spellcasters, then eliminate the





other foes. Do a detect traps on the chest near the door as well as on the stairs leading down and search the area. Take a look around the area to the south (the shelves are trapped) and head out the door nearby.

Head back to the Copper Coronet. You might find yourself attacked by a duo of ruffians, Corvale and Bregg. Though they seem like nice enough fellows, they might start a fight. Eliminate them and take their items if you can't dissuade them. When you get back to the Coronet, talk to Hendak again. He'll give you a number of items as well as a little gold and experience. Now, you can continue exploring the city if you wish. There are a few shops and houses around, and you can check out the planar sphere if you wish. It's locked at this point, but you'll be coming back to it later on. Once you're done looking around, head out of the city and go over to the city gates. Make sure you're healthy before you do; you're going to be attacked en route. You'll be facing off against a party of six, with a wizard in the mix. Suna Seni is also a spellcaster, so you might want to take them out first. Once all the enemies are dead, search their bodies. There are a lot of magical items in the mix, so be sure to pick them up and sell them later on. Once you're done, head to the edge of the screen and keep moving toward the city gates.

Once there, you can obtain another quest from Flydian, standing near the cart. You can head to the nearby tavern and rest if you wish; be sure to update your spell lists if your characters have been gaining levels. Your character might have a rather bizarre and prophetic dream if you haven't rested lately. Once you're ready to go, head to the gates and click on de'Arnise hold.

You may be waylaid and attacked by a group of four adventurers. If so, kill them and rescue Renfield. He'll ask to be taken to the docks. If you want to help him and gain a few more quests, go ahead, pick him up, and head back to the docks. Once there, move to the very southwestern corner of the area and talk to Rylock. He'll take Renfield off your hands and give you a small reward. A woman named Valen will ask you to see her mistress in the graveyard; respond as you like, but it couldn't hurt to say you will. Brus will walk toward you and ask you to see Gaelen again. Tell him you'll do so. You can also talk to Ikert to sell any items that you want to get rid of.

Nearby, you'll encounter Xzar, who'll ask you to find out what happened to Montaron in the harper's building. Tell him you'll do so. You shouldn't poke your head around too much in this area unless you want to start trying out





these quests; you can come back later on, when you're done with the quests for Nalia and Jierdan, and complete the ones you're picking up now. Be especially wary of the steps leading down from the long walkway in the middle of the area. If you step into the tavern, a strange man will curse Jaheira, which might affect her performance until you can get the curse lifted. Avoid the tavern for now.

Now, you have a few options as to what you wish to do next. The majority of the quests in the game take place in Chapter 2, so you can wander around town attempting to find them and explore them if you wish, then return to Gaelen when you have the 20,000 gold. Feel free to choose your own adventure here. We'll cover a few of the more interesting side-quests at this point, but don't forget that there may be more lurking about in the game.

de'Arnise Hold

Head back out toward the de'Arnise hold. You should make it all the way this time. This quest isn't very long, so there's no real reason to avoid it if Nalia is in your party. There are extra bonuses for fighters, who can gain control of the keep when the quest is complete, but other players will want to try this one out as well.

Once you're close to the keep, you will stop, and Nalia will explain what to do. Though she implies otherwise, the only way in is via the secret door north of the palisade (in case you didn't know, a palisade is a structure made of logs stuck vertically in the ground). You can rest and memorize some new spells if you wish. Acid arrows, flame arrows, and other acid or fire spells will be necessary to take on the trolls, so be sure to stock up on those. Once you're ready to go, head west until you encounter Captain Arat. He'll tell you a bit about the base and give you 20 fire arrows.

Head directly north of Arat's position to find the secret door in a rock wall. Head through it, and you'll be underneath the keep. Proceed to the north, searching the room there. Open the door and another secret door will be revealed. A troll is inside. Once it's defeated, open the secret door on the northwest wall, and Daleson will be revealed. Interrogate him to learn that there are around 30 trolls hanging about, with an unknown number of yuan-ti. Be nice to him, or you'll lose a few reputation points. Walk into the room where he was hiding and look around; there are items on the weapons shelves. Keep following the trail of secret doors to the northeast until you reach a statue of a lion; take its treasure and head all the way back to where you killed





the troll. (Take note of the forge in this area; you'll be coming this way again.) Go through the door and explore the large dining area. There are a few more trolls around as well as a couple of ice trolls. Search through the barracks to the north for some more gold. Head to the east of the dining room to find the doors leading outside. Kill the otyugh and the four watchdogs. Pick up the dog meat and send one of your characters up the flight of stairs. There's a door nearby; you can send your party up to check out the roof if you want, but you shouldn't go through the door on the roof; you'll find yourself surrounded by trolls and a yuan-ti mage when you arrive on the second floor. Have your character walk all the way around to the drawbridge and open it. Arat's men will walk through and a few trolls will appear, along with a giant yuan-ti. Help out in the fight if you wish, but save your fire arrows; Arat's men will do the honors on the trolls. Now, head back to the kitchen area with the dogs' remains and make a dog stew. Take the nearby stairs to the second floor.



Keep your Melf's acid arrows spells on standby.

Your tasks on this floor are to find the keep key, rescue Nalia's aunt, and defeat a warrior named Glacias. First, head into the southeastern door and follow the corridor into the library. You'll encounter a couple of trolls and a yuan-ti mage. The mage can be fairly difficult, so be careful that you don't get





trapped behind the trolls. The larger troll will split into two smaller enemies when defeated, so be ready for that as well. When they're defeated, search the room for the keep key, among other things. Now, head back to the room where you started the level. Head out into the northern hallway and go through the door to your left. This is one of the bedrooms. There's a fireplace that's trapped to the north. Once you detect the secret door, head through and follow the passage. Another secret door near the end of the corridor will show you into another living room. Through the door nearby, you'll enter another bedroom where Glacias is waiting. He's not terribly difficult to beat as long you have a couple of warriors in your party. When he dies, search his body for another flail head.

Now, head all the way back to the bedroom with the trapped fireplace. Head to the north along the outermost corridor for the level. You can unlock the door along this corridor and head to the roof if you wish; there's nothing there except a couple of yuan-ti. Circle the level and head through the circular room. Lady Delcia is past the first doorway you'll discover. Once she's rescued, search her room for another secret door. Through here, you'll discover another two secret rooms. To the north is a chamber full of golems that will be activated when you pluck the items from the northern statues. You can send one of your characters in to attempt to run quickly up to the statues, grab the items, and escape before the golems kill you, but you might be better off just force-attacking them one by one. The iron golem is very tough, so if you can't take it out, you might be better off attempting the smash-and-grab method with a single character. The statue to the far left has the third flail head. Once you have all three, you can return to the first floor, where you found Doleson, and head back to the northern forge and make a flail of the ages. Once you are done exploring in there, or if you just want to skip the room, head down to the basement via the nearby stairs.

You'll find yourself in a large room. Through the door to the south, there are a couple of trolls and a tougher spirit troll. You can clog the door with your warriors and cast animal or monster summoning spells on the other side of the door to put the squeeze on them. Once they're dead, proceed into the next room.

The door here leads into a room full of umber hulks. They're surely going to be too tough for your party to handle, since they can confuse your characters almost effortlessly. You're going to need trickery to get past them. Remember your bowl of dog stew? Give it to Nalia or a spellcaster that can cast an





invisibility spell. Have him cast invisible or hide in shadows and walk into the room of umber hulks. Go through the door to the southwest and head down that corridor until you come near a corner. Open the door and place the dog stew in the chamber with the dog bones. The umber hulks will come down, and you won't have to fight them. You can also do this with a quick runner, someone who has protection from confusion, but you'll likely take a few whacks before you can place the stew.



Search the statue when you've dispatched Torgal.

Once the umber hulks are gone, search their room for more goodies. To the north lies Torgal, a troll, and two giant troll henchmen. This is a tough fight, so be sure to save your game before wandering in. Torgal and his gang enjoy ganging up on a single person (like most enemy groups in the game), so whoever is in the way should be very mindful of his health. As always, you can block the door when they attack and attempt to take them on one by one.



Summoning spells will also be a good idea here to slow the trolls up a bit and perhaps even damage them a little. Once they're dead, search the area. There is a locked container at the foot of the statue that contains around 2,200 gold as well as a few more goodies.

Now that the castle is mostly cleansed, you can head out to the courtyard to finish the quest. You can take the three pieces of the flail of ages you have to the forge on the first level in the secret passages and make the flail of ages, a +3 flail with some magical enhancements. If you don't have all the pieces, you can still make a less-powerful version of the flail at the forge. Once you reach the courtyard, you should let Nalia stay with your party. If you're a fighter, you can take possession of the castle as well to use as your stronghold. Send someone up to lower the drawbridge and watch out for more trolls. Walk across the bridgehead out to your next quest.

Windspear Hills

This is an optional quest, so feel free to skip this section if you want to move on to the real story. The rewards are fairly great if you can survive the entire ordeal. You'll come off it with a ton of experience as well as a holy avenger sword, which is only useable by paladins. It's so good, however, paladins should consider it an essential piece of equipment. You can return here later in the game to face off against the rather tough enemy that guards the sword, if you wish.

Once you arrive in the Windspear hills, you'll find yourself surrounded by ogres and other beasts. They will attack you, so kill them all. You will immediately be approached by a man named Windspear, who will offer you sanctuary at his house. Accept his offer to be whisked away to meet his daughter. Apparently, those Ogres were actually paladins, polymorphed by some malevolent magic.

After you rest at Windspear's home, a group of bandits will warp in and kidnap his daughter. Slay the rest of them and tell Windspear that you will rescue her. Once you leave the cabin, you can walk around for a bit if you wish. You can travel to the north to check out the bodies of the paladins that you killed, but they don't have anything interesting. You should travel to the southeastern corner of the map to visit the faerie grove. You might encounter a group of fighters attacking some gnolls; the fighters are actually werewolves that will turn on you eventually. Dispatch them and head on to the faeries. You might encounter some minor monsters on the order of an ankheg or goblin. Once





you reach the dryads, give them the acorns to rescue the three dryads you encountered near the beginning of the game.



There isn't much here except for random enemy encounters.

Now, you can head toward the dungeon entrance to the northeast. Head inside, and you'll be ambushed by a horde of hobgoblins, so be ready. There are more hobgoblins to the northeast, including a few archers. Before you move to the north, you might want to send a scout there and lure back the kamikaze kobolds. These guys explode into what appears to be a fireball when they die, so you should have any archers or sling-users take them out before they get near your party. When they are dead, head up and take out Ruhk the Transmuter. He's a magic user, of course, so deal with him appropriately. He's not physically very strong, so swarm him with your fighters. You can travel through the stairs now or look around the rest of the cavern. There are some ogrillions to the north as well as vampiric mists. You can find an amulet of protection +1 in the pool of water.

Once you head down to the second floor, you'll be ambushed by orc archers who sit behind bars so that your melee attackers can't reach them. There are two secret doors you can unlock and open to reach them, or you can use spells and ranged weapons to take them out. Summoning monsters or



animals behind the bars seems to work fairly well. Head out to the northeastern hall and take out the stone golem, then head to the southeast. The troll cook in here will ask you to cook yourself, then attack you when you refuse. A group of hobgoblins will charge in from the southwest, so you might want to summon some monsters over there before they come through. Once that party is dead, grab the orcish cookbook from the table. You can kill the otyugh to the southwest, but there's nothing in his lair. Now, head back to the hallway. You can talk to the orcs in the northwestern room to learn a bit about the lair if you wish. Now, head to the northeast from the middle door in the hallway. You'll come out into another hallway. Head south into the nearby room. It will be almost full of undead enemies, so anything that can hurt those creatures (like turn undead) will be helpful. The chest near the wall is trapped and contains some magical bolts. Push through into the southern room that contains a greater wraith. Eliminate it and pick up the chapel key from the floor. You can close the door here and rest if you wish.



This dungeon can be confusing.

Head back to the northwestern hallway and proceed until you meet Samia. She'll ask you to perform a mini-quest regarding some texts she wishes to find. You should know up front that this is an optional and fairly dangerous





quest. Head through to the next hallway beyond her and take the first door on your right. Look around for the Book of King Strohm III in this area. You must defeat six djinnis to acquire the six pieces of a certain mask; this will let you see the invisible creature Samia referred to. These six djinni are scattered around the small, self-enclosed area beyond this door, and there are plenty of traps scattered about as well, so be careful. The djinni will be attacking with fireballs, so be sure that any of your weaker characters stay out of the way. They love to cast invisibility on themselves, as well, so that's another problem you must anticipate. Don't forget to equip your main fighter with the ring of fire resistance you picked up upstairs and heal often. They use a few fire-based spells, like flame strike and fireball, before switching to melee attacks, so if you can give one of your characters a huge fire resistance, he might take them on single-handedly or at least take most of the fire spells before the rest of your characters come in for the kill.

Once you reach the small square room with four doors, go to the northwestern door for the last Djinni. Now, save your game and rest again if you're injured. Head through the northeastern door for an encounter with the guardian (a fire elemental). Have your main character equipped with King Strohm's mask, or you can't see him. Again, he's fire-based, so beef up your fire resistances before taking him on. Once he's dead, head through to the next room. You're about to be ambushed by Samia and her companions. This fight is extremely tough. Save your game ahead of time, and if you can't defeat them with acceptable losses, you might want to skip this area. The items in the back room are dragonscale armor and a dragonslayer sword, and Samia's company possesses a great deal of items, but you might not kill them all. There are a couple of spellcasters in the party, and your front line fighters have a tendency to get confused.

Head down the path leading to the northwest now. Kill the werewolves in the way, then use the winch by the well to drag up a dragon helm. You'll be attacked by an air elemental and stone golem, so be ready. Afterward, you can head to the southwest until you're approached by four paladins who ask for your help. They're actually werewolves in disguise. You can dispatch them, then take the horn of blasting from the nearby cabinet. This is a good room in which to sleep if you're wounded.

Now, go north and into the large rocky cavern you passed. You'll witness a fight between a few monsters. You might as well let them fight it out, then pick off any remaining beasties. There's a secret wall on the north face of the





rocks. You can head through to take on a few golems, including a massive adamantite golem that will be quite tough to kill. It can deal more than 20 points of damage per blow, and you'll be hard pressed to deal more than a few points of damage per hit to it. If you want to fight it and two stone golems, you'll be rewarded with a heartseeker +3 bow and a rare gem from the stash on the north wall.

Now, head back to the winch and head northeast. You'll encounter a few enemies and a locked door. Head through the locked doors until you reach Tazok and his captain. These two baddies are somewhat tough, but they will fall eventually. Search their bodies, the table, and the cabinet on the wall. Now, head upstairs to meet with Firkraag and Conster. Firkraag, if you choose the right responses (try not to fight him) will send Conster back downstairs. Head for him, kill him, take the key, and unlock Iltha's cage. Now, you can head back to Windspear if you wish, or you can try to kill Firkraag.

Firkraag, as befitting such a powerful beast, is almost impossible to kill at this point in the game. He has some powerful attacks, like the wing buffet, that will injure all your party at once as well as deal magical effects, like sleep, to it. After he hastes himself, he generally likes to start holding and pummeling nearby foes. If you have one extremely powerful character, on tactic that might work is to make him as resistant to fire as possible, then send him, alone, to force-attack Firkraag. After that character is held or when it seems appropriate, send in the rest of the troupe to finish the dragon off. You can, of course, return to this area later and kill Firkraag if you don't feel that you can do it at this point. He'll drop a holy avenger +5, a magical shield, 1,500 gold, and the red dragon scales. If you bring this last item to Cromwell in the docks of Athkatla, he'll make a suit of red dragon armor, conferring an armor class of -1 on its wearer as well as 50 percent fire resistance. This is some of the best armor in the game, so be sure to stop by Cromwell's the next time you're in town.

Once you escape the dungeon and get back to Windspear, he'll thank you and give you an experience bonus. You should have enough gold now to pay off Gaelen, and even if you don't, you should have more than enough items to sell to raise the 20,000. You can feel free to keep doing side-quests at this point, or you can head back to Athkatla. For now, head back to the city gates of Athkatla, where you'll be given a new quest by Delon. You don't have to do it yet, but pick it up for your quest log. Head to Gaelen. You can sell your items at the Copper Coronet if you wish.





As a note, you can head to the graveyard (at night) to meet with Bodhi if you wish. She'll be offering you essentially the same quest as Gaelen, but she's an obviously evil person. If you are evil as well, you might want to accept her offer; if not, you're better off with Gaelen. Either way, you'll want to check out her lair; it has some interesting areas. If you wish, you can explore the graveyard. There are a couple of mini-quests that stem from encounters you'll have here. There are also a fair number of tombs you can rob. Note that inter-area bandits will be tougher as you progress through the game, so travel cautiously.

Once you arrive at Gaelen's house and accept the offer to find Imoen, the next chapter will begin. The price has dropped to 15,000 now, so pay up and start Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

Now that you've paid off Gaelen, it's time to go about locating our good friend Imoen.

The Shadow Thieves

Once Chapter 3 starts, head off to the docks. The building you seek, the shadow thieves' guildhall, is to the west of the entrances to the docks, and the building is guarded by a single soldier. Head in and start poking around. There are a bunch of locked chests around that you can loot, if you can get the locks open (Nalia's not a great thief, having dual-classed at level 4). If you wish, you can head upstairs to get a quest from Bloodscalp, but the real thieves guild is located behind a secret wall on the first floor.

Head down and talk to the people in the thieves' guild. Aran is located behind another secret door in the main room here. Open it and follow the corridor until you reach Aran. Unfortunately, he's going to want you to perform a few more quests before you can start working toward Imoen.

First off, he wants you to visit a friend of his named Mook on the docks at night. You might have to rest before you can go see her. When darkness falls, head off to the southern portion of the docks. Mook will approach you. When you're done with the conversation, you'll hide near the docks, waiting for the mysterious man to approach. He'll warp in suddenly and kill Mook. He's some





kind of undead creature and can drain levels, so be cautious. Once he's dead, head back to Aran. If someone had levels drained, you might want to head for the temple in this area first to restore him.

Once you reach Aran, he'll give you another quest. This time, you must head for the Five Flagons Inn in the bridge district. You may be attacked by a woman named Hareishan as you head toward the exit; she can level drain, so be careful.

Once you arrive at the Five Flagons Inn, head inside and save your game. You can rest if you wish. Head upstairs and start looking for the two men that Aran wants investigated. Talk to them a bit, and when they turn hostile, kill them. A guild contact will approach; kill him as well. Take any items you find interesting and head back to Aran. You can head to the downstairs area of this inn to learn more about Haer Dalis', another NPC, if you wish.

He'll take the information you've given him and ask you to visit the graveyard district. You should rest up before heading into the graveyard; this part of the quest is a bit tricky. Be sure to memorize a few slow or neutralize poison spells if you have them available; lesser restoration and negative plane protection spells are useful as well. If you've been contacted about Nalia's father's funeral, you'll be whisked off to a mausoleum when you reach the graveyard, where you will meet Nalia's former betrothed. Speak to the guests and get back to adventuring. Beware: if you rest too long, Nalia may be abducted by her fiancé (this will probably happen a set time after the funeral anyway, so you might want to rest and get it over with). If this happens, you might want to head back to the Copper Coronet and pick up Yoshimo before heading into Bodhi's lair, or you can attempt to rescue her before moving on in this quest.

Bodhi's Lair

The graveyard is a collection of crypts and mausoleums, some of which connect to Bodhi's lair, most of which do not. You can look around through the various crypts; if you encounter enemies, you can either run or fight. There are four entrances to Bodhi's lair from the surface; each leads to the same expansive level. The best place to enter is in the section to the southwest of the graveyard, the entrance across from the pyramid. When you enter, you'll be near Pah'Na's nest, and you can deal with her first.





It doesn't take much perception to find the nest; it's the huge structure made of spider webs. There are poisonous spiders in the nest and around it, so get those anti-poison spells ready. Once you're inside, Pah'Na will summon 15 to 20 baby spiders; these aren't tough individually, but they will transmit a quick-acting poison on your characters. It's best to keep your fighters up front, let everyone else attack from a distance, and save the healing spells until after the fight. Act fast, though, or your fighters will die before you can heal them. Once Pah'Na and her brood are dead, steal her items (check the ground near the center of the area). Once she's defeated, the randomly spawning spiders around the lair stop appearing, so you can head back to the graveyard and rest if you wish.

Now, you can either head south to an optional area of the dungeon or head north to meet with Haz. If you head south, you'll be facing an area full of traps and undead creatures. There's nothing critical in this area, and the level-draining beasts will be tough, so explore at your own risk. Just be sure to keep detect traps on. There's a secret door on the southern corner of the first room, leading to another area.

When you do head north, you'll meet Haz and his golem. The golem will open the northern doors and start attacking the nearby monsters. When they've been cleared out, follow Lassal into Bodhi's chambers. Gellal will be off to the left when you enter the dining room; take him and the other monsters out before veering off into any of the nearby passages. Check the pool of blood to the northwest for a mace of disruption, which is an excellent item for a cleric or other mace-user to equip here, as it has special bonuses against the undead.

Tanova will be waiting for you in the passage to the southeast. She's a vampire and absolutely loves to cast spells on herself - and cast a few on you for good measure. A paladin with a holy avenger can face off against her at fairly low risk, but you must be sure to dispel her invisibility before most of your characters can. Once she's dead, check out the rest of the rooms in this area. You might find the room with the clay golem; you can use the wooden stakes Aran gave you on the vampires here to finally kill them (and get some free experience).

Now, head down the stairs off the dining room. You'll fall down into a small sub-level; the layout is fairly easy to maneuver. Once you reach the doors, you'll be heading into a room full of fledgling vampires and grimward archers,





so you'll want to cast negative plane protection on your fighters in advance. You can do well if you summon a few higher-level monsters, animals, or even an elemental up near the door, then have a negative plane protected warrior open the door and attempt to fight a bit. Explore the other two rooms nearby, and Lassal will warp himself upstairs.



You'll be coming this way again, later in the game.

Once you take the stairs back up, head toward the nearby room full of spikes (near where Tanova was). There are a lot of traps here, and even Yoshimo seems to have a hard time detecting them. They do around 20 points of damage per hit, so you'll want to proceed slowly and surely through the room. Going north of the pool seems to be a slightly better route than the southern path. Once you reach Lassal, kill him and head back to the safety of the dining room. Save your game and head back to the room with the Golem and the vampire graves. Use wooden stakes on the remaining coffins. Bodhi will



appear and fight you. She's tough, obviously, and possesses the normal undead attacks such as level draining and the like. She doesn't seem to go for spells too much, especially if you have your warriors crowd around her before she completes the teleportation. She'll die fairly quickly, but watch out, as she can level drain a character to death if she concentrates on one of your fighters. You might want to move her target out of range if he nears death, especially if that target is your main character. Once she's dead, head back to Aran on the docks. He'll give you a large amount of experience and tell you how to rescue Imoen.

Now is one of the best times to wander around and finish off some of the quests you might still have in your journal from Chapters 2 and 3. You can also offload some items, visit the temple or government districts, or perform any other odd jobs you haven't had time to complete yet. You must tell Aran that you want to restock your supplies if you wish to complete some of the mini-quests. Otherwise, head on to the Spellhold Asylum and Chapter 4.

Chapter 4

OK, so we still haven't found dear little Imoen. We're getting close now. We promise.

Brynnlaw

Once you arrive, try to save. You'll be told that monsters are about. Uh-oh; it looks like Saemon was in league with Bodhi and managed to ambush you with a few vampires. Take them out, and Sime will tell you to head to the tavern. Check your map and do so.

You're to speak to a man named Sanik, who might have some information for you regarding Spellhold. Unfortunately, he'll be killed just before he can tell you what he knows. Kill the assassin, and the innkeeper will send you on a mini-quest to solve Sanik's murder.

Head down to the guildhall and talk to the male or female courtesan, depending on the sex of your main character. You can pay to get into the guildhall; it's 100 gold (or 50, if you haggle a bit). Pay the fee, and your entire party will be whisked inside (apparently the courtesans are really ready for action). Head up the stairs, and you'll find yourself in a hall. Head northwest and kill the guards nearby. One will come out of an adjacent room to the left of





the locked door; go in there and search the cabinet for Galvena's key. Head through the locked door, and you'll encounter Galvena and her wizard friend Vadek. Galvena will fall easily, but Vadek might cast one of those lovely spells that confuses almost everyone in your party, so you might want to concentrate on her first. Once you've killed them both, talk to Claire. You will eventually find the information you need, either from her or from a captain she'll take you to. After you find out what you want to know, you can either walk around the city, performing random acts of kindness and doing some of the mini-quests or head straight for Spellhold.

The easiest way to do this is to head for Perth's house. He's a somewhat unstable mage that lives in a house in the northeastern corner of Brynnlaw. Once you encounter him, he'll probably insist on a "test" and go immediately hostile. He might set off a fireball-type spell centered on himself once you get close to him, so be careful. Once he dies, pick up the wardstone.

Now, head to the far northern end of Brynnlaw. You'll encounter Sime near the edge of the map. Tell her you can now get into Spellhold and walk off the edge of the map. A neat little movie will play, and you'll be on your way to the asylum. It's a long walk up the path, and there are mists about, so be ready. Follow the path through the graveyard until you reach the door that leads into the structure.

You'll be approached right away by the "coordinator." It doesn't take a genius to recognize the voice. Irenicus will take you on a guided tour of the asylum. (You can take a couple hundred gold from the table in the elf's room.) Eventually, he'll reveal his identity, and Yoshimo, if he's accompanying you, will be revealed as a traitor.

Once you're forced into the dream sequence, you'll appear outside the castle walls in some ethereal otherworld. Walk toward the castle, and you'll be forced to permanently give up one of your stat points to gain entry. Choose one of your non-critical skills, obviously. Changing a skill in the mid-teens rarely has a huge effect; reducing your dexterity one point will have no effect on battle, as long as it starts out anywhere from seven to 14. Check the ability tables on page 225 of your manual if you want to peruse the stats before making your decision.

Explore the castle and find Imoen. You must find "the beast" outside, southwest of the castle proper. Bhaal will appear; tell him to chase you, then





run back inside to Imoen. Once you battle for a bit, the dream sequence will end.

Asylum Dungeon

When you wake up in the dungeon, Imoen can finally rejoin the party. Equip her with whatever extra items you have on you. You might want to rest a bit and memorize some spells if you have gained levels. Head northeast. Go into the room at the intersection and kill the clay golem within. There's a trapped barrel here containing the very useful bag of holding; this item will contain 20 other items in a shop-like interface and doesn't affect your character's encumbrance. There are also some magical darts for Imoen, if you haven't armed her yet, as well as the necessary opal stone. Whatever you do, avoid the hall to the north of this room! It's trapped with an instadeath mechanism if you attempt to pass through it. Instead, go back to the beginning room and head to the northwest. Go through the first door and kill the gibberlings inside. Examine the chest inside for some more bullets (if you're using a sling) as well as an important ruby stone.



This is only half the dungeon you'll be crawling through.





Now, the next room you'll encounter to the west is a room with 11 statues and corresponding riddles. You must take the items from the middle of the room and place them in the proper receptacle. You can attempt the puzzles if you wish or just go counterclockwise from the door: star, golden circlet, boots, water, sundial, sun necklace, sword, gagged man, mirror, hourglass, skull. You'll receive another item from the chest and 20,000 experience points.

Ruhk is near the portal to the northwest. You can kill him now if you want or come back later. For now, head to the east, where another puzzle awaits. Starting at the top of the room, go clockwise from the statue at the left. The answers, in order, are: ice, fire, coffin, candle, darkness, stars, hole, secret, fish, breath, sponge, shadows. You can do them in any order, of course.

Head back to where Ruhk is or was. If you didn't already, kill him. Head through the stargate - er, portal. Unfortunately, once you click on it, a pit fiend will pop out, so be ready with a protection from evil spell. You can place all three stones you gathered - opal, ruby, and sapphire - to summon a pit fiend, a greater werewolf, and a friendly djinni, who will give you a doomplate +3. You don't have to face them all; in fact, you can drop all but the sapphire stone to summon the Djinni right off the bat, without having to face the other two enemies.

Now head back to the room with the clay golem. Take the door to another area nearby. You'll see a scroll; you can click on it to summon five different monsters, ranging from a kobold to a beholder. Defeat them all, and you'll receive some choice magical scrolls and a very useful item: a ring of free movement. Now, head through the secret doorway to the north. You'll be encountering hordes of kobolds in here; they won't do much damage to you, but the witch doctors can be difficult. Once you reach the large crystalline structure, a few more witch doctors will warp in. Kill them all, and you'll get a piece of the altar, which you'll need to make it to the second level. You can search the bodies for a short bow and some arrows for Imoen if you wish. Be sure to search the body with the quarterstaff and pick up the stakes.

Head to the room with the ancient scroll and proceed south. Once you reach the intersection, you can head north for a not-very-rewarding fight with a half-dozen umber hulks if you wish. The only discernible reason to fight these guys, other than the experience, is that it will open a bit of a shortcut to the beginning of the level when you must return in a bit. It's probably best to avoid the area. Proceed to the southwest. Go through the door to the north to find a





ton of gold as well as a few scrolls. Now, head around the corner and proceed to the northwest. Get ready for a battle.



Here's the second half of the asylum dungeon's first level.

Dace Sontan is another vampire. He's not extremely tough; just a regular old vampire, it seems, that likes melee battle. He'll probably drain your levels just for fun, but if you have people casting spells behind the fighters, he'll die fairly quickly. Stake him in his coffin and get his hand. Now, head all the way back to the room where you began the dungeon. Head to the southwest, and you'll encounter a statue's head. Since you have the keys (the hand and the crystal), it will open and give you access to the upper part of the dungeon.

Head through the southern hallway first. (The northern hallway is a dead end at this point). Find the two secret doors and unlock the southern one. Turn the wheel and head through the northern door with your fighters leading the way. Three trolls and a spirit troll will be waiting for you. They guard a couple of mithril tokens that you can use later on. Heading down the corridor, you'll encounter a room with four minotaurs. Check the pot near the door for some more tokens.





Now, the room to the northeast is interesting. It has more tokens as well as the minotaur's horn item, which you should retrieve. The three statues inside also hold paintings, which unlock the doors past the yuan-ti you might have encountered earlier. Unfortunately, they're guarded by undetectable traps. Choose a strong character with a good saving throw versus death (Imoen is not a good choice) to retrieve the items, as the first trap will instantly and permanently kill the character unless a saving throw is made. The other two statues appear to cast a fireball and a fire cloud spell, so resistance to fire would also be a wise attribute. Be sure to get the painting from the pool as well.

Head to the south and go through the room with the trolls. You'll encounter Bodhi. Have your main character proceed into her room, but tell the rest of your party to head backward into the nearby room and turn its AI off. Your character will transform into a rather beastly creature and attack Bodhi. Wait until you transform back to normal to regroup your party, or else you'll wind up attacking everyone else. Beware; when you rest, you might wind up changing back into the Child of Bhaal creature. Have the rest of your characters run away again until your primary character changes back to normal.

Go through the doorway to the north. There are a bunch of minotaurs here as well as a mini-beholder gauth. You don't have to fight them all; just take the tokens from the pool near the door and leave. Head to the south to fight more minotaurs; you'll find more tokens as well as the very fun limited wish scroll in a pot nearby.

Now, head all the way back to the entrance to this level and take out the yuan-ti in the northern room. Each of the four entrances here corresponds to a different painting that you picked up earlier. The third door to the left is the only one you must go through here; the others are optional, with monsters and items behind them. The mind flayer to the left has a two-handed sword, the Flame of the North, which grants the user a 10 percent resistance to magic, the troll to his right has a +2 katana, and the noble djinni has a skydrop gem (which is worth a massive 12 gold).

Head through the third door and proceed east. You'll enter a room with three clay golems. Get ready for them or force-attack them and open the chest. Once you get the tokens inside, you'll probably want to rest from the beating you took from the golems. Now, head to the south and take out the stone golem. Grab the last tokens from the table and head west. You'll encounter





the boot machine. You can put in five, ten, or 15 tokens. Five tokens gets you boots of grounding with a 50 percent resistance to electricity; ten tokens gets you boots of the north with a 50 percent resistance to cold; and 15 tokens gets you boots of speed, which will increase the speed of one of your characters by 150 percent. The boots of speed are pretty cool to have for your main character, but they can cause havoc in party movements, with one character running into enemies when the rest of the party is lagging behind.

Head all the way back to where you met Bodhi. Click on the minotaur statue to open the doors leading up.

Ready for weirdness? Kill all the kobolds in the area, and an apparition will appear. You will be asked questions throughout the next section; where you are teleported depends on the "clarity" of your answers. Try to be nice and respectful and answer the riddles correctly, and you should be fine. The easiest way to get through is to tell him to ask his questions (the first response), after which you will appear in a room with a spore colony. You'll then find yourself in a chamber with more apparitions. Answer their riddles correctly (nothing, river, fear, memory) to find yourself back in the asylum. There are roughly a dozen rooms you can visit all told; make enough bad choices, and you'll face a decidedly tougher route than the one outlined here.

Asylum Proper

Saemon will recommend a course of action for defeating Irenicus. Rest your party and memorize a few spells; you'll be fighting him soon. Walk around and head up to the second level of the prison. Lonk will apprehend you; you can either pay him 2,000 gold to release the prisoners or attack him. Once the prisoners are released, you'll find yourself facing off against Irenicus in short order, so get ready.

He's tough, but not unbeatable. Swarm him immediately with all your short-range fighters, taking him on at point-blank range, and have your spellcasters use spell sequencers and magic missiles if they have them. He'll summon clones of your characters if you give him a chance, so be sure to act quickly. The crazies will be mostly useless here, despite their supposedly awesome powers. You can't control them, and Jon can probably kill them almost immediately. Once he warps out, he'll summon a group of invisible murderers. Head to the right of the center tube, so they can only attack you on one side. Have your strongest characters up front and, when they attack, take the assassins out quickly. (Don't forget that barbarians are immune to





backstabbing, so if your character is one, place yourself up front to act as an invincible target.) As long as you can hear them say they'll plant their blades in your innards, it's not safe to move. They only have around 30 hit points each, so they're not too tough. If you began the asylum with Yoshimo, he'll appear again now and attack you. Once he's dead, take his items as well as his heart (right-click on it for another mini-quest).

Walk around the now-open areas of the prison. Jon's key is on the upper floor in his private quarters as well as his journals and some other items. You can accept Saemon's offer of escape by ship if you wish; you'll find yourself in a short side-quest in Sahuagin City, which will yield some more experience and items for you. For now, find Jon's key and head back to the portal on the first floor. Go through to begin Chapter 5.

Sahuagin City

If you decide to head to Sahuagin City, you'll find yourself outside the asylum. Head back to town and meet Saemon at the tavern. He'll reveal that his ship has been scuttled, and you must steal the pirate lord's ship to proceed. He'll ask you to steal the seagate horn from the pirate lord's mistress, Cayia. Sleep until it's nighttime, then go to Cayia's house on the west side of the city and head inside.

Once inside, you'll witness a conversation between Cayia and her lover Algor. Once Cayia is alerted to your presence, she'll summon three pirates whom you can handle easily. Grab the horn from the table and head out to the docks in the southeast corner of the city. Give him the horn, and you'll be on your way.

Before you leave, however, Desharik will appear and attempt to take back his ship. After he cuts down Cayia, get ready for a fight. Take out the pirates, and you'll be on your way.

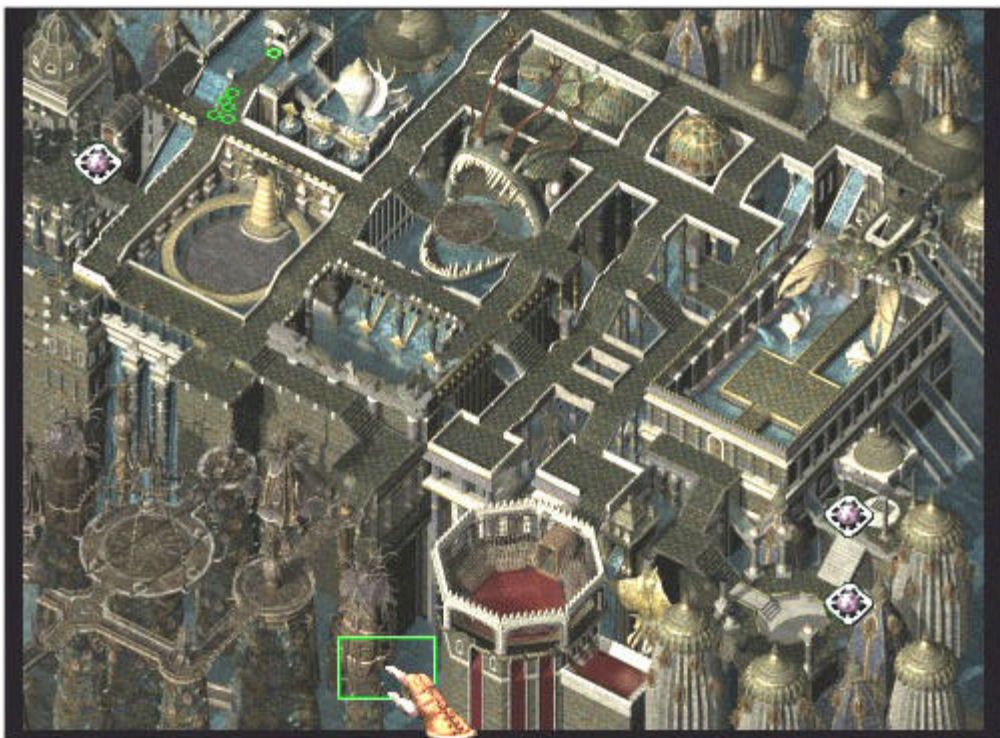
After a short interlude, you'll find yourself fighting yet again. The Githyanki that have boarded your ship are looking for a weapon, a weapon that Saemon conveniently gave you. After a short battle, your ship will be about to sink, due to an unexpected influx of Sahuagin forces. After another interlude, you'll find yourself in Sahuagin City, meeting with a royal high priestess. Eventually, you'll be brought before King Ixilthetocal. You'll be asked to fight a "slave from the surface." Despite your reservations, do so, and you'll be paired off with an ettin (one of the coolest-looking enemies in the entire game). Take him out to





earn the king's favor. (If you choose not to fight, you must kill the king, the high priestess, and all the guards. It's doable, but extremely difficult.)

After your fight, tell the king that you will find and kill the rebels. Before you head off, though, go to the northeast and speak to the High Priestess. She'll ask you to betray the king and side with the rebels (which is the good characters' path through this area). Do so, and you'll receive the rebel orb.



So why don't the sahuagin live underwater if they're so aquatic?

For now, head south of the king's area, and you'll find yourself entering an area full of traps (guarded by a sahuagin that attempts to warn you off). Be sure to keep detect traps on and watch out for enemies, including sword spiders and ettercaps. You'll even come across a rare bone golem.

Once you reach the area with the imps, agree to play their game. First, have a thief detect and disable the five traps scattered around the platform. Then, talk to each character to learn what item he needs. The riddles are simple to solve if you pay attention. But if you can't figure them out, place the items in this order (clockwise from Elminster): pipe, staff, pendent, helmet, and scimitar. Now, head to the north (detect the slowing trap before the bridge) and talk to



the spectator beholder. He's a rather amusing guy, so it'd be a shame if you had to kill him. You can keep selecting the first option in the context menus to persuade him to let you peek into the chest, if you like; this way, he'll just float off after you grab the item from the chest. (You'll get 15,000 experience this way, which is more than you would've gotten if you just killed the beholder.) The item in the chest is Sekolah's tooth, a key you'll need to visit the rebels.

Now, go back to the high priestess' station and proceed to the west from there. You'll eventually find yourself entering a room shaped like a fish's mouth; you'll be jumped by rebels, so save your game ahead of time. Kill them all and be sure to grab the cloak of mirroring from the priestess' body; it will reflect all spells cast upon the wearer back onto the caster.

You can fight against the sea zombies in the southern portion of the map if you wish; you don't have to, however. Head to the west when you want to speak to the rebels and look for a locked door. You must fight through a few rebel patrols, but they won't be too difficult. Once you make it through the western gauntlet, you'll be brought before the prince. Take the fake heart and head back to the king.

You should be warned that the king will attack you as soon as you give him the false heart. You might want to summon a few creatures and chant or haste your party before beginning the fight, just to give you that added edge in the conflict. His minions are not difficult to beat, but he possesses a spear of impaling that can do massive damage when it strikes, so be careful.

Once the prince comes to power, he'll give you a magical rope that you can use to lower yourself into the Underdark. (The hole is located behind the prince's former location in the southeast corner of the city.) Chapter 5 will begin after you find yourself below.

Chapter 5

So, you've always wanted to meet some drow, eh? You'll get your fill (and more) of them in this chapter.

Underdark

When you begin this chapter, you'll find yourself in the Underdark, a cavernous area populated by dwarves and drow. Walk to the east and





interrogate the duergar. Buy the freedom spell from the merchant as well as any other scrolls that you may need, then walk to the north a bit. If you encounter elementals, run. They will continually be regenerated near their portals. (You can actually kill these guys in succession for a bunch of experience if you want, with rest stops near the duergar in between sessions.) Once you find the area with one passage heading east and three heading west, cast the freedom spell. A mage, Vithal, will appear. Accept his offer, and you'll be given the first mini-quest of the chapter.



Welcome to the Underdark.

Head north. Ignore the bizarre spherical structure for now and proceed east. Defeat the myconids and go north. The gnomes will let you into their city. Head up and around the passage, following the rails, until you reach the two doors leading into the rooms you circumvented. Speak to the mayor of the city to pick up another quest. Talk to the innkeeper to buy Vithal's spellbook. Finally, speak to the shopkeeper and tell him you'll rescue his son.

Now, head back to the northeast until you reach the gnome guarding the demon's door. He'll open it, letting you into the beast's lair. You can click on the ladder to summon a balor. They're quite tough, with limited magic



resistance and quite a bit of resistance to normal weapons as well, but you'll beat him eventually. Use the stoneshape scroll and head back to Golander. He'll give you the item you need to head to Adalon's lair, but head back to the southern portions of the level first.

First, head back to the strange globe you passed earlier. You'll notice six separate panels on the globe; you can click on a panel to release one of the inhabitants trapped inside. The fifth globe (from the left) is Therndle's son. Release him and head back to the inn to get your reward (bracers of defense with an armor class of 4). One through three contain regular (enemy) warriors; but the sixth contains a friendly adventurer who will give you information. Panel number four contains a lich you can take on if you feel lucky.

Now, head back to Vithal. Give him his book and tell him you're ready. You must fight a greater elemental from each of the three portals, so be sure to rest up before you begin his tasks. Once you've defeated all three elementals, he'll give you a small amount of experience and a rod of absorption. You can kill him if you wish to gain a few more items from his corpse, though he's monstrously difficult, with spells like time stop and disintegrate, giving him a good chance of killing one of your party permanently. If you don't want to fight him, you can ask for a bit more treasure to get a random scroll.

Once you're done with all these quests, go back to the globe area and proceed to the west. Eventually, you'll come across a cave. Enter it to speak to Aladon, a gigantic dragon. She'll ask you to retrieve her eggs from the drow that stole them and will offer to let you out of the Underdark to an area near where Irenicus is now. Accept her mission, and your party will be transformed into Drow warriors for the rest of the chapter.

Drow City

Now, proceed out of her lair and move northeast. You'll encounter a drow. Tell him that you are Veldrin, and you'll enter the drow city. You can look around for a bit; there are a few shops on the entrance platform. When you're ready to go, head northwest past two large structures until you reach the Male Fighter's Society. Solaufein will be nearby, ready to initiate you into drow culture. You must be careful not to make anyone upset here, or the city will become hostile to you, essentially ending the chapter. Talk to him, and he'll eventually tell you to meet him by the city entrance. Do so, and a matron mother will tell you to rescue a drow scout that has been taken captive by mind flayers. You must head to the mind flayer cave to rescue her.





Go back to the main cave area and proceed south. You'll be attacked by a raiding party, so be careful. Once you reach the mind flayer cave, speak to Solaufein, and he'll draw the illithids from their astral wanderings. They are extremely tough, so you might want to summon a few helpers ahead of time. They like to hold your party, so if you have a ring of free action, the character wearing it should be near the middle of the action. You can have your spellcasters summon monsters, then retreat past the bridge to the west before the battle begins if you want to keep them out of harm's way. There will be a couple of mind flayers with a few umber hulks for company, so be very careful when they start to warp in.



There's plenty to do in the drow city.

Once the illithids are defeated, Phaere and Solaufein will head back to the city. You should do so as well. Once there, you'll learn that Phaere wants to speak to you in the tavern. Locate it on your map; it's just northwest of your position. She'll tell you to meet her by the platform again. You can meet the other inhabitants of the tavern or participate in a duel here if you wish. You probably should; you'll get 30,000 experience points for the first fight against a warrior with a huge amount of health. The second and tougher fight will yield



just 12,000 experience points. The third fight will be mage versus mage. This fight will only yield 6,000 experience. There's only one fight after that, another mage versus mage affair.

Once you arrive at the entrance to the city, a duergar might ask you to speak to the tank near the slave's quarters. If you do so, an aboleth will ask you to kill a drow priestess and bring him her brain. You can do so if you wish, but good parties will likely want to skip the quest. Just keep telling him that you refuse the task, or you'll inform the rest of the city of his treachery, and he'll tell you to go away. You'll get 12,000 experience for doing nothing.

You might have to rest before Phaere will appear at the city gates. She'll assign you to a new task; she wants you to kill the beholder that is smuggling adamantine. So, head to the southeast docks of the city near Deirex's tower. Talk to Phaere, and a beholder will warp in. Kill it, and that's that.

Now, head back to the tavern and speak to Phaere again. She'll ask you to strike a little fear into the nearby gnomes. Head outside the city and walk west toward the gnomish city. If you're a good party, you can tell Solaufein you wish to handle the gnomes yourself, then head north and tell the party's leader why you need his helmet. When you have it, go back to the tavern and talk to Phaere. Tell her you'll meet her in her private quarters.

Go to the Female Fighter's Society and speak to Phaere. She'll ask you to kill Solaufein. Tell her you'll do so, then walk to the Male Fighter's Society. Tell Solaufein of the plan and ask for his cloak. He'll thank you for your mercy and leave. Head back to Phaere, and you'll be... congratulated. Hop into bed for a rest if you like.

Now, you'll be commanded to go outside the city and get the blood of one of three races: the kuo-toa, the beholders, or the mind flayers. These offer differing levels of challenge to a party. The kuo-toa are by far the easiest, being primarily a battle-oriented race, while the beholders and mind flayers will be more rounded enemies, with magic and mind control spells confusing the situation. You can choose one of these two if you wish, but the easiest path is through the kuo-toa tunnels. There's nothing preventing you from attempting the other missions, so if you want more experience later on, check your map for the entrances to the beholder or mind flayer caves and take a look around.





Kuo-Toa Lair

The entrance to the kuo-toa lair is marked as the western tunnels on your map near the myconid cavern area. Quicksave once you enter and head to the east. You'll find yourself in a large cavern. There's a chamber to the northwest with a beholder and two gauths if you wish to try your luck there, but be careful: They're quite tough. To the northeast, there is a kuo-toa party, consisting of a few warriors and a priest.

Head west from the main cavern and bypass the northern corridor for now. There is a fiery passage here; it's trapped with a flamestrike spell. Send a character with high hit points or magic resistance through to trigger it, then send the rest of the party through. This room is a trap; summon an animal on the altar to warp in five demon knights. You can kill them for some great items, though, including a girdle of frost giant strength (it permanently sets one character's strength to 21).

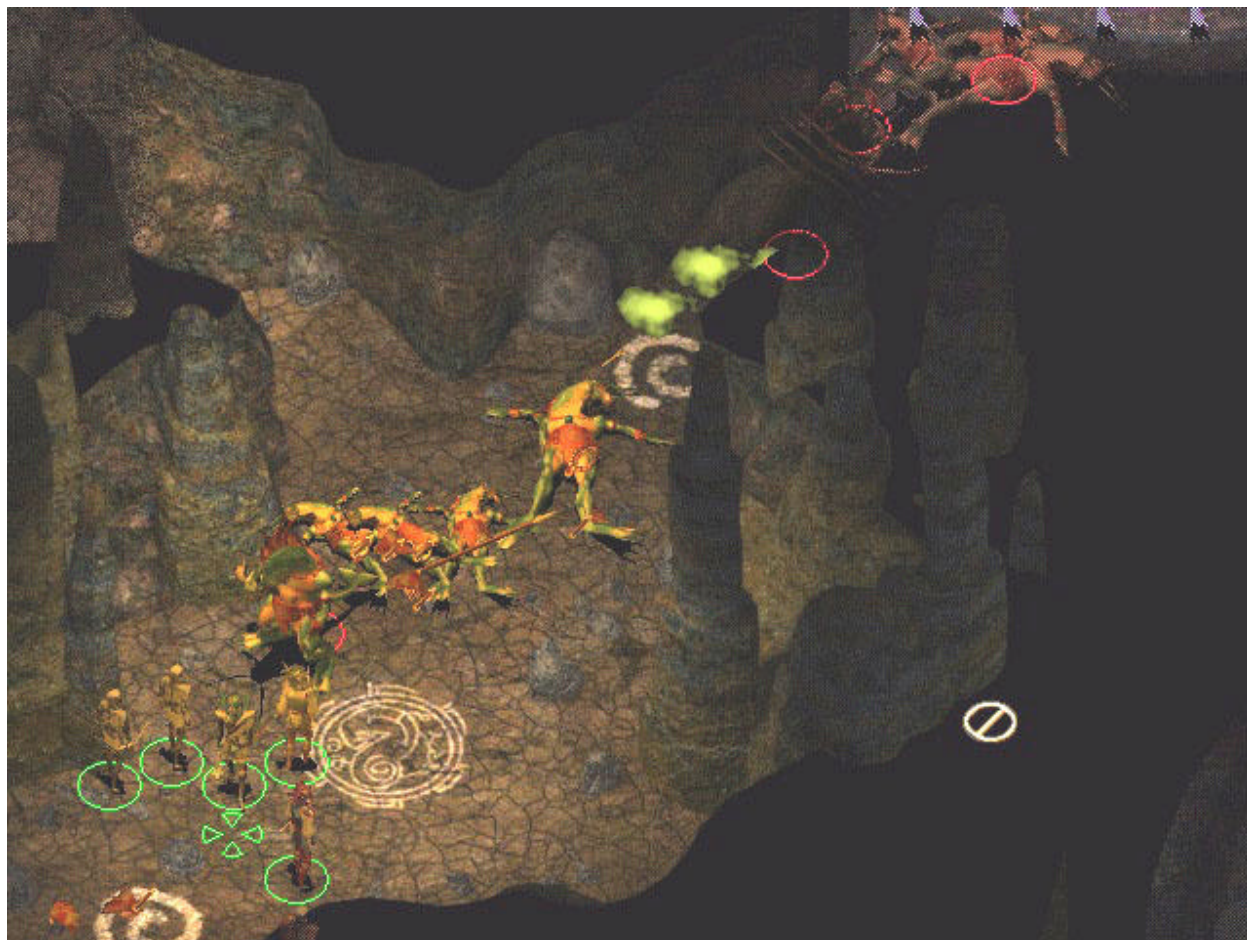
Now, head up the northern corridor. Defeat the kuo-toa and proceed northwest. This is going to be a tough battle, so be sure to save and heal your characters before you proceed. When you enter the small room to the northwest, you'll face off against a party of kuo-toa, including a captain and a wizard. Unfortunately, as the battle rages, other kuo-toa to the east and west will be alerted to your presence and rush in. You might want to try summoning creatures into the small room before heading in or sending a mage in to cast a lead off fireball or cloudkill spell in an attempt to lure the captain and his entourage out into the cavernous area. You'll be facing off against at least a dozen kuo-toans all told, with the wizards, captains, and the prince himself being the toughest of the bunch. The prince seems primarily a melee fighter, but he can take a ton of damage, and the monitors or priests can heal him. Once all the enemies are dead, search their bodies for treasure. The prince's body will have the blood you need as well as more than 4,500 gold.

Now, head back to the drow city and talk to the matron mother. Phaere will want to speak to you in her quarters, so walk back to the Female Fighter's Society. Phaere wants you to exchange a set of fake dragon eggs for the real eggs that the matron mother has. As you walk to the Temple of Lolth, Solaufein will appear before the door and give you yet more fake eggs to give to Phaere. Accept his offer and head inside. Now, give Phaere's fake eggs to a thief that can cast hide in shadows or (preferably) a priest capable of casting sanctuary. You must make the exchange without the guards finding out about it, or you'll be dead. The egg chamber is to the west. Send your solo





eggschanger (groan) over there and have him become invisible. Once the door to the chamber is opened, the egg guards will go hostile, so make sure the rest of your party is nowhere nearby. Once you make the exchange, the golems inside the chamber will become hostile as well, so be careful. Once you make the exchange, leave the chamber and head back to Phaere. Give her Solaufein's fake eggs.



If you can clog the narrow hallway, you can deal with the Kuo-Toa forces more easily.

Proceed to the mother matron's lair in the Temple of Lolth. She'll begin a ritual to summon a powerful demon to help the drow in their battle with the surface elves. Once the ritual begins, the demon lord will appear and smite the matron mother for tempting him with false eggs. Phaere will bite the dust, as well, leaving you all alone with their corpses. Check the bodies for some interesting items, including gorgon plate +4 and a ring of spell turning. Get ready to fight:





The city has finally turned hostile to you, and you must get the hell out of Dodge as quickly as possible.

The flight to the city gates probably isn't as bad as it could be. You might want to summon an aerial servant or other monster to act as your vanguard. You'll encounter a few drow, a wizard, and a bunch of commoners near the entrance. Once you head out to the cave area, go to Adalon's lair. She'll transform herself into a human and transport the party to a spot in the kuo-toa lair that leads to the surface. There are drow guarding it if you didn't kill them earlier, but she'll help out in their destruction. Once she teleports back, you'll get almost 80,000 experience for each party member.

Head through the door, but save your game first. You'll be ambushed by a party of drow, including spiders and a wizard. The wizard may summon an earth elemental, so watch out. Proceed to the north, where the drow apparently tunneled through to the elven quarters. You will encounter more drow, but there will be plenty of war elves to help take them out.

Once you reach the surface, Chapter 6 begins.

Chapter 6

Upon your arrival on the surface, you'll be interrogated by the elven commander Elhan. Answer his questions respectfully (and truthfully) and be sure to ask for the stakes and holy water before you leave. Once you do leave, you can explore the two small forest areas that appeared on your overland map if you wish. When you head back to Athkatla, you'll be "waylaid by brigands;" really, it's Drizzt Do'Urden. You can ask him to help you in the fight against the vampires; he'll make the fight a lot easier, so it's recommended that you do so.

Don't head for the graveyard right off; go to the town gates and rest in the inn (you'll get fatigued from the long journey if you don't). Once you're well rested and stocked with spells (negative plane protection, false dawns, restorations, and the like will be helpful), head off to the graveyard. Bodhi will ambush you right away and sic a vampire or two on you. These are the real deal, not the fledgling vampires you encountered before, so be prepared.





Bodhi's Lair Redux

Once you reach Bodhi's lair, you'll find that everything is much as it was before, except for a few of the offshoot passages having been collapsed. You must enter through the doorway on the western side of the graveyard. There are lots of vampires on the first level, and they're not happy that you're there. Avoid the dining room area for now and head to the northwest toward the pool of blood with your main character only. (If you bring your whole party here, there's a risk that one will become confused and attack Drizzt, causing his party to abandon you.) Drizzt and company are there and will dispatch the vampires in the room. Click on the pool of blood and pour some of the elven holy water into it. All the vampires here will be weakened and slowed, which will make the upcoming fight much easier. Head back to the tombs to the south and stake all three for some experience.

Now, proceed slowly into the dining room area. You will be facing eight to ten vampires here, both fledgling and full-blown. If you can maneuver it correctly, you should have your fighters and summoned creatures block off the corridor, protected by negative plane protection, with your magic users doing nasty things like false dawn. Once the vampires are killed, you can check the pool of blood to the west for gauntlets of weapons expertise (+1 THACO and +2 damage) and another stake, but it's protected by vampiric mists. (Remember to thank Bodhi for leaving both a mace of disruption and stakes in her lair; she probably ran with scissors quite a bit as a child.)

Head downstairs when you've cleaned out the first floor. Disable the traps on the floor of the hallway and get ready for another fight. Again, have your front-line fighters protected from negative plane interference. Bodhi will call in eight of her closest friends to help in this battle, so be warned. Drizzt will be tagging along here, but if one of your characters gets dire charmed, he'll probably start attacking them, which isn't a fun situation, since he can deal so much damage. You might want to lead off with your strongest fighters, then have clerics or mages come in when the vampires have cleared out from the doorway. Again, a false dawn spell here will be quite helpful if you can get it off. Once Bodhi is dead, search the bodies and the antechambers for items. Stake Bodhi in her coffin to get experience, Bodhi's heart, and the rhynn lantern.

Go back to Elhan and speak to him. He'll tell you a bit more about Irenicus and Bodhi, then take you to the entrance of the elven city. He'll head in, and you'll gain yet more experience. If you level up, you might want to rest here





and learn new spells; you should probably make a permanent save as well. This is a perfect opportunity to go back and complete some of those side quests if you've been neglecting them. (You can't continue with your characters after you beat the game, so it might be helpful to get the experience now.) Go into the entrance to begin the seventh and final chapter.

Chapter 7

It's time for the final portion of Baldur's Gate II. Moving right along from the drow elf areas, the rest of the game will take place in regular elfland, beginning in Suldanesslar.

Suldanesslar

Elhan will ask you to find Ellesime or Demin to find out what's going on in the city. There are plenty of monsters around, including rakshasas, golems, and trolls, so be careful. First, head to the north and search the house there. You'll encounter two stone golems and a clay golem, so be careful. Take the cloak of elvenkind and the stone horn from the receptacles and head back to Elhan. Now, proceed west to the area marked "House of the Talisman" on your map. Above it are the priest's quarters. Head up to the priest's house and take the elven priest stone from the desk. Now, go to the house of the talisman and click on the puzzle above the fireplace-type device. You'll be faced with a puzzle, the answer to which is on the priest stone you just got. (The sequence is corellan, rillifane, water, and tree.) You'll receive the talisman of rillifane when the box opens. Don't miss the narrow ledge on the bookcase in the north end of this room; it'll contain a high-level scroll.

Now, leave the room and proceed west toward Demin's house. Destroy the skeleton warriors that are attacking the elves. Save your game before heading further to the west; you're about to face a nasty spellcasting drow. Raamilat has a pet nabassu that will attack you when you get close enough. If you send a scout character up there, you can lure the nabassu away and kill it. Once you get closer, Raamilat will cast time stop, with meteor swarm, protection from evil, and gate (to summon a pit fiend) during the pause. Your best bet might be to select a character with high fire resistance to act as a punching bag here, triggering the time stop, then running away before the meteor swarm really gets going. Despite his protection from evil, the pit fiend will probably attack Raamilat right away. You can jump off-screen to let them fight, though Raamilat will probably kill it fairly quickly with a disintegrate or horrible





wilting spell. Be careful fighting Raamilat; he can maze your characters, which will take them out of the action for a bit.

When Raamilat is dead, head into Demin's house. She's being attacked by three rakshasas. Kill them, with the focus being on the Adsaan, the spellcaster of the bunch. Speak to Demin for a while to learn exactly what Irenicus' original crime was, and you'll learn that you must find three artifacts to summon the avatar of the leaflord. You already have one; the talisman of Rillifane, but you need the other two: a golden cup and the moonblade.

Walk southeast where you fought the skeleton warriors. From there, proceed northeast toward the House of the Moon. Enter it, and you'll witness an encounter between the city's chosen warrior and a balor, after which they'll both die. Pick up the moonblade from the warrior and head to the northwest. Stop by the harpist's house and get the stone harp, then go to the forest clearing. Save your game; you're going to be fighting a dragon pretty soon.

Nizidramanii'yt (say that three times fast) is a black dragon that guards the golden goblet of life in the forest clearing. You have two options: Give him all your possessions for the goblet or take it from him by force. You can drop all your items on the ground and get around him that way, though you'll still lose gold, and it will be quite a hassle dropping every single thing you have on all six characters.

Fighting him is also fairly difficult, though. He's tough, obviously, and he can cast an insect swarm that will do massive damage to your party over time. (It seems to be around two or three damage a second in real-time.) This will prevent them from casting any spells while the spell is in effect, so you'll want to cast any offensive spells before he manages to swarm you. Horrid wilting is an excellent choice if you have any scrolls or are of a high enough level to actually cast it. In any case, once he's cast the swarm, he'll probably revert to one-on-one melee attacks, with occasional breath or wing buffets thrown in to the mix. When he falls, take the goblet of life and rest in this relatively safe area.

Head to the Temple of Rillifane on the west side of your map. Be careful when approaching: There are Rakshasa guarding the entrance. Send a sacrificial monster or animal to suffer the cloudkill spell that the spellcasting rakshasa will throw down (which, by the way, will probably take out a couple of his teammates as well), then follow up with the rest of your characters.





Once you enter the temple, you'll be facing off against a number of enemies. You can take them all out for the experience, or you can turn your party AI off, then place the goblet, moonblade, and talisman of Rillifane on the table to summon the avatar, who will disintegrate everything in the room. When he opens the gates, you can finally enter the palace to the north.

Once you reach the palace, click on the tree inside until you get all the nuts from it that you can. There are two types here: four inedible nuts that will serve a use in the next section of the game and four edible nuts that will act as healing potions when used. You should have your main character place these in one of his quick-slots, as they're even more powerful than extra healing potions. Proceed through the door, then click on the two statues to stop the flow of water, revealing a staircase.

The Tree of Life

You're now on the lower level of the tree of life. You must find the three parasites that Ellesime tells you of and destroy them. They're scattered about the level; you can see their positions on the map. When you click on them, two normal elementals will appear to guard them. You shouldn't have much trouble with a simple enemy like this at this stage of the game. Once you manage to destroy all three parasites, you'll immediately be warped to fight Irenicus, so be sure to heal or rest before you destroy the third creature and certainly save your game.

Fighting Irenicus is about as tough as you'd imagine it would be. Any summoned creatures disappear when you're warped to his location, so don't bother attempting to summon reinforcements beforehand. Irenicus is a high-level spellcaster with a penchant for time stops, horrid wiltings, mazes, wails of the banshee, and what appear to be sunfires. For defense, he has pretty much every anti-offense spell in the book, with absolute immunity being one of the first spells he casts, along with spell trap. He'll also cast fire shield (red) on himself, which by itself can whittle down your AI-controlled fighters. He'll generally become invisible fairly soon as well, so be sure to have something to dispel that. All in all, this is certainly the toughest fight in the game (so far). After a long while, he might eventually start physically attacking you, in which case you might survive by turning off your AI and simply running away from him when he tries to strike you. Eventually, his protection spells will wear off, and you can kill him. Keep healing potions on your main character to ward off death. Once he's dead, you'll find yourself in the final area of the game: hell.





Hell

Hell is an area that contains five different tests that you must undergo before heading to the final battle. Walk west to the test of wrath first. You must fight Sarevok, but you can choose to either give in to your anger or not. Assuming your character is good, choose not to (generally the first choice in the conversation menus). Sarevok is probably the toughest melee fighter you'll see in the game, possessing many hundreds of hit points, but he won't use any spells at all, so use that to your advantage by having your mages sit back and pelt him with spells. When he dies, you'll get the first tear of Bhaal. You can rest in the main area of this level without fear of being disturbed.

South of wrath is the test of greed. This is a fairly simple one for good characters. Take the blackrazor from the demon and give it to the djinni to earn the second tear of Bhaal and 20,000 experience points.

To the south of the main area of hell is the test of selfishness. This is one of the more frustrating tests; when you head through the left door (which is the good path), your character will lose two hit points (permanently), one point of dexterity, and experience. On the other hand, proceeding through the evil path results in the trapped character's death, so you must suck it up and take the loss. Nobody said being a good guy was going to be easy.

The southeastern test is the test of fear. You're given the choice between accepting the cloak of bravery or attempting to pass through the cavern on your own. Reject the offer and cast resist fear on yourself. Head through the lower portion of the cave and pick up the tear of Bhaal. If you head to the northern end of the cave, the elder orbs and gauths will kill you, so be careful.

The final test to the east is the test of pride. Keep questioning the demon and be sure to refuse killing a creature simply because it is "in your way." You can avoid the fight this way, and a dragon will give you the final tear of Bhaal.

As a note, the benefits for doing things the "good" way are somewhat substantial. If you chose the evil path on even a single test, your main character's alignment is immediately switched to evil (resulting in instant death for a paladin). The benefits you obtain as you open the five seals on the door are also different for good and evil characters. There were some other negative aspects to the evil paths of the specific tests; feel free to load up a game and see what happens if choose the other path through a test.





Before you approach the final door, get ready for the final incarnation of Jon Irenicus. He's really not extremely tough, though he does summon two glabrezus and two balors as soon as the fight begins, so a protection from evil spell would be wise to cast beforehand. If you're powerful enough, you can probably just lure them to the southern end of the level and kill them; Irenicus doesn't seem to do much when you're not around, though he will mislead himself, so be careful. He's actually not really Irenicus when you fight him; he'll become the slayer creature that you've morphed into on occasion since your soul was stolen. Weirdly enough, he seems to have fewer protections against melee weapons than when you fought him at the tree of life, or those that he does cast will run out before the demons are dead, so surrounding him and pounding might work in this instance for parties with powerful melee warriors. He does cast death spells on occasion, though, so if you can get out of his line of sight and send a few summoned animals or elementals toward him, he might throw away a few of his more advanced spells before you must advance.

One trick that you might use to your advantage is that the slayer simply isn't very aggressive. He'll chase you, but if you throw a couple of summoned creatures in the way, he'll generally stop to deal with them and then stop where he is if he can't see you. So, you can simply wait for a while a screen or so away from the slayer, heal up, wait for any mazes to wear off, and when you come back to the slayer, most of his spell and weapon protection spells will have worn off. He does regenerate at a fearsome rate, though, so you'll probably be facing him at full strength this way, but he'll be easier to hit with your weapons and have fewer spells at his disposal. In the end, brawn defeats brains, so surround him and apply a beatdown to end all beatdowns for the win.

As we noted previously, there is unfortunately no way to continue the game with the same characters after you defeat Irenicus for the final time. If you want to keep on playing, you can always load up an earlier game or import your characters into the forthcoming Neverwinter Nights game.





Appendix: Cheat Codes

For those of you out there that just can't get by without them, here they are. These will give you more items, pass more levels, and just plain make some parts of the game easier, more difficult, or more fun. The thing about the Baldur's Gate II cheats is that you must edit a primary .INI file that could completely mess up the game if you don't follow these directions to the letter, so do this at your own risk and be sure that you type them all in correctly.

First, you must edit the .INI file in the Baldur's Gate II directory, so let's get to that directory. Open the drive on which you installed the game (Windows key + E), then open the Baldur's Gate II directory by double-clicking on it. In there, you will see a pad of paper with a yellow gear in the lower right corner with the name "BALDUR". Double-click this, and under the line that reads "[Program Options]", type the following:

Debug Mode=1

Now, all you must do is start the game. When the game is running, hit the Ctrl and space bar keys at the same time, and you can type in the field below your characters' command lines. It is in here that you will be typing your cheat codes. Below is a list of the codes and a brief description on what they do. Type these exactly as shown, or they will not work.

CLUAConsole:TheGreatGonzo()

This will summon some chickens that will attack your enemies.

CLUAConsole:FirstAid()

This will give you five healing potions, one stone to flesh scroll, and five neutralize poison potions.





CLUAConsole:Midas()

This will give you some extra money (500 gold pieces).

CLUAConsole:DrizztAttacks()

Creates Drizzt Do'Urden, but he will attack you. It's fun to practice on, though.

CLUAConsole:DrizztDefends()

Creates a Drizzt that will not attack.

CLUAConsole:CriticalItems()

Did you drop an item that you now need and its gone? Use this to have all critical items come back into the game.

CLUAConsole:ExploreArea()

This will clear away all the black on the map.

CLUAConsole:AddGold(amount of gold)

This will give you some extra money for your travels.

CLUAConsole:SetCurrentXP(amount of exp)

This will give you some experience to help you gain some more levels.

